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A TRIP TO MINORCA.

WHEN in Palma, the capital of Majorca, we told of our intention to cross to the island of Minorca, they tried to dissuade us from the trip. 'There is nothing whatever to see in the island except the *talayots*,' we were informed. 'Its scenery is about as beautiful as that of Lincolnshire; and its hotel accommodation, save in Mahon, the chief town, decidedly rough.'

But a fair acquaintance with the world had taught both my friend and me to distrust the opinion held by the inhabitants of one island about the nature of an adjacent island. Such opinion is apt to be based upon prejudice, or even upon reasonable envy. No sensible person would give full credit to the judgment of an average Frenchman about Great Britain and her people; or suppose that our insular ideas of France and the French are trustworthy through and through. Besides, there were special reasons why we should feel a curiosity about Minorca. Had we not, in the Palma Museum of the Lonja, seen a great esentheon in stone of the lion and the unicorn lolling against a wall with cobwebs about it; and had we not been told that the monument was a relic from Minorca—a reminiscence of the days of the last century when the British made themselves very much at home in the little island? Majorca is a very lovely land, full of flowers, and with a nook of mountains where the scenery is so alluring and grand that it would be hard to match anywhere. But Majorca has been Spanish ever since its conquest from the Moors in 1225. It has never, like Minorca, had the Union-jack flying gaily from its forts during the spring and autumnal equinoxials.

And so we resisted our friends' counsel, and one afternoon went aboard the steamship *City of Mahon*, bound for Port Mahon. It was a breezy April day, and the white horses were running at a great pace outside Palma's bay. Our passage was not a pleasant one. The boat had a fiendish kind of roll in the open sea. Moreover, the deck was populous with a crowd of little boys and

girls—a juvenile theatrical troupe, engaged to perform twice or thrice in Minorca before returning to Spain. They were attended by half-a-dozen older folk, including the 'prima donna,' a languishing beauty, whose pallor was soon emphatic enough to show through her painted blushes in a very sad way. And save the fat manager of the troupe, I believe in half an hour every man, woman, and child belonging to it was very sea-sick. It was about as disagreeable a scene as it could be; for Spaniards are not heroic under such a trial.

Sunrise found us, however, at anchor in the fine harbour of Mahon. The frowning forts of Spain were to our right; and on the other side of the inlet we could see the dismantled ruins of the works built up so spiritedly and with such art by our own engineers nearly a hundred and fifty years ago. A rosy sun was just peeping over the red houses of Mahon, and casting a fair welcome sheen upon the still water of the inlet, and making the rather bare hilly boundaries of the harbour look pretty enough in the translucent air.

There was every promise of a fine day, a mercy to be grateful for in the Balearics in spring, when a good deal of rain is wont to fall. Summer here is generally as dry as a bone. The hot plain country of Majorca is then, in spite of its vineyards and olive woods, a profoundly disagreeable place of sojourn. The dust and glare of the long white roads are very conducive to ophthalmia. They are bad enough in spring, but summer much intensifies the badness. Each brook bed then dries up and cracks, as if it besought the obdurate heavens to pity its agony of thirst.

The diligences of the interior are vile instruments of torture at any time. Even in the coupé, where you do get plenty of air, you are half choked by the cloud of dust in the midst of which the three or four little long-tailed horses jog along with a well-assumed air of resignation. Those who are used to the land find support in the bad cigars of Spain and the

thimblefuls of brandy which it is the fashion to drink in the different villages by the way. But to an unbroken foreigner, these are additional sources of irritation, not springs of consolation.

Late in the day we found ourselves in the diligence from Mahon to Ciudadela, with a blue sky over us, and a very endurable amount of dust in our midst, arising from our horses' feet. In Minorca, by the way, they have a wicked habit of cropping their horses' tails poodle-wise, which much detracts from the dignity of the noble animals.

We had in the meantime spent several hours among the ruins of the British forts at the head of the harbour, and reflected about Admiral Byng. It seems clear that in our day we did not seize upon the right positions for fortification. Out of question, Spain has shown wisdom in concentrating her powers upon the other side of the inlet. It is a torpedo-shaped headland, all but an island, elevated, and with precipitous red rocks as a seaward boundary. From this elevation, the Spanish engineers look down upon the remains of our Forts Marlborough, St Philip, and the suburb of George Town across the water. Their guns have a very formidable air, and the acres of red-roofed ammunition stores, barracks, and other buildings on the heights, are sufficiently impressive.

Our hopes of a closer inspection of the Mola, as this great fortified post is called, were signally defeated. Though I bore a letter to the chief officer of the place, he could not act as he would like to have acted. A Government pinnacle was offered us, that we might sail round the cape. But as for getting within the walls, that was impossible. The War Minister had issued an express prohibition, and not to oblige a crowned head would my friend have run counter to it.

We rambled from one heap of rubbish to another, and marked where the French cannon-shot had harmed us most. Flowers were blooming heartily among the ruins, and bees buzzed about us. The blue sea laved the lower parts of the work, transparent for many a yard. The whole area is conspicuously devoted to slow decay. Above, on a prominent rock of the fort, are a few tombstones to British officers, but they are quite indecipherable. The salt air has eaten into the stone; and lizards scamper at headlong speed up and down their hot surfaces. And below, in the arched subterranean rooms, a myriad of names are scrawled on the plastered walls, Spanish as well as British. Of the latter, some are as modern as you please, for the Mediterranean squadron often comes to an anchor in Port Mahon and gives the jack-tars a day on shore.

Unless the Duke of Newcastle's ghost revisits the earth to afford us information, I am afraid we are unlikely to know the truth about the tragedy of Admiral Byng. He certainly failed to relieve the siege of Port Mahon, and so we lost the island. But it is by no means certain that he deserved blame for the failure. Be that as it may, he died like a gentleman.

'What satisfaction,' he asked, 'can I receive from the liberty to crawl a few years longer on the earth with the infamous load of a pardon on my back? I despise life upon such terms, and

would rather have them take it. I am conscious of no crimes, and am particularly happy in not dying the mean, despicable, ignominious wretch my enemies would have had the world believe me.'

When the news reached him of his suspension, he stripped off his uniform and threw it into the sea. This was at Gibraltar. He was executed at Spithead, on the *Monarch*, on the 14th March 1757. A cushion was set for him to kneel upon in the fore-castle of the ship—though he protested he was entitled to die on the quarter-deck—and at the dropping of his handkerchief five of the six marines who had been told off for the hateful task shot into his body. The sixth missed his aim.

'There lies the bravest and best officer of the navy,' exclaimed a common sailor, when he fell dead.

It is hard to read Byng's last words without feeling some emotion. If he was merely a State tool, to be discarded and broken when done with, then the statesmen who sacrificed him had much to answer for. In any case, none but a man of sterling worth could have expressed himself as follows at such a time: 'Would to Heaven I had died discharging my duty in the day of battle; then would my name have been transmitted, with my father's, to posterity with honour, which now will be remembered with indignation, a reproach to my relations, a disgrace to the marine, and a scandal to my country.'

When we had ridden the whole length of the island and viewed it from an eminence in the middle, we reluctantly came to the conclusion that Minorca is rather a dull and not at all a beautiful country. Save its harbour of Mahon, it has little to recommend it to the world at large. The winds are so strong over it, and the surface is so flat, that nowhere are there trees of any size. For the most part in the interior, where barley is not grown, a low scrub covers the land; though in places there are the beginnings of little artificial copses of pines which may in time get the better of their enemy, the storms.

A capital road runs through the island from north to south. General Wade started it; but since our day Spain has much improved on it, and now it would gladden even the critical soul of a bicyclist. The Minorquins meander up and down it on a very respectable species of ass, and in a mood that makes them ready to stop and gossip with any one who addresses them with a commonplace civility. There are several bright little villages in the interior. Alayor is the chief, with a big church and a sheaf of windmills conspicuous over its white-faced houses. Also, there is Mercadel; and close behind Mercadel is the famous peak called Monte Toro—or the Bull Mountain—upon which, several centuries ago, the Virgin is said to have appeared one day, in consequence of which the place was made the site of a church and monastery.

From Mercadel, which is as nearly as possible in the middle of the island, a good road trends west to the clean little village of San Cristobal. Here we picnicked agreeably with a native to whom we had been recommended, and paid respectful visits to sundry talayots of the vicinity.

Antiquaries and archaeologists would delight in the talayots of Minorca. But to the common traveller they repay investigation less than one has a right to expect, seeing how their fame has been noised abroad. They are not nearly so attractive as the nuraghe, or round towers, of Sardinia, with which they may have an affinity. They are harder to discover, and as spectacles they are trivial. But there is no doubting their antiquity. Even the nuraghe must yield them the precedence for their roughness of architecture and crudity of design.

A talayot is merely an irregular round or polygonal heap of rocks, with or without a central chamber, the rock masses at the base being of course the largest. There is little attempt at masonry in them. The limestone lumps have been dug out of the adjacent soil, and piled one upon the other until the edifice is of the desired height and magnitude. They are of various dimensions, the average being about fifteen yards in diameter and about six in elevation. Where internal chambers exist, they are generally approached by a hole that is little better than a burrow, slightly below the surface of the soil. Here, too, the workmanship is much more primitive than that of the nuraghe, which are not only built of stones very fairly dressed, but which further have in some instances spiral inner staircases as well as a lofty domed chamber of considerable strength.

Who shall say, with assurance, whether the builders of the talayots and the builders of the nuraghe were contemporaries? It is not improbable, even though the latter seem to belong to a more cultivated age. Both may be the handiwork of men of Phœnician origin, or of the primitive populations whom the Carthaginians displaced. In the neighbourhood of certain of the talayots one sees clear traces of an arrangement of monoliths in the form of colonnades, porticos, and chambers open to the air. This is notably so with what is termed the Hostal group by Ciudadela, the old capital of the island, at the north-west corner of it. Some of these monoliths are recumbent, having evidently been overturned by force; but it is easy to give order to the others, in spite of the jungle of flowers, bramble, and ryegrass which envelops them. Very interesting and suggestive here is the rude highway through the brake of vegetation still indicated by the monoliths. A brace of stones, each about five feet and a half in height, stand like gate-posts in front of the entrance chamber of one of the talayots; and at the base of one of these monoliths my friend and I discovered, deep embedded, a basin of stone for all the world like a piscina, about a foot in diameter. We hit upon it by chance. What purpose it may have served, we could not of course tell.

The talayots apart, there is not much to say about Minorca. The town of Mahon is humdrum and rather pretentious. Its four-storeyed red houses seem to date from the same epoch which saw the rise of the Bloomsbury district of London. I daresay the same architects, or their pupils, had a hand in both achievements. The town deserves some praise for its hotels, in which you may live satisfactorily for about four shillings a day. This includes wine and also certain of those nice little biscuits which in Spain are known generi-

cally as 'Minorquin pastry.' No doubt, thanks to the tradition of British occupation—at least we will take leave to fancy so—cleanliness is in much esteem here.

Boots and shoes appear to be the staple manufactures in Mahon as in Majorca. The cobbler looks up from his work for a moment at the sound of a strange step on the very rough stones which pave the streets; but he has not enough curiosity in him to follow the wayfarer with his eyes for more than a moment. Another industry merits notice: this is the arrangement of shells and seaweed in fancy forms, such as ships, boxes, bouquets, and the like. It would seem a species of labour likely to be better rewarded at Ramsgate or Ilfracombe than in Mahon. There is, however, a certain demand for these pretty trifles from the British sailors when the fleet calls here.

When we had been four days in Minorca, we felt that we knew the island as well almost as the oldest inhabitant. It is but twenty-eight miles long by about ten broad, and easy of access everywhere. Word was then brought us of a steamer likely to set off for Palma on the fifth day. Without delay, we offered ourselves as passengers; and so duly the shores of the little island receded from us as the gray mountains of Majorca grew clearer. There was a lusty gale again, and a sea in which we tossed somewhat rudely. But eight hours sufficed to carry us across the strait, and enabled us to set foot once more on the much livelier strand of Palma.

The entire population of Minorca is only about thirty-five thousand, whereas Palma alone has nearly twice as many.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XXVII.—'CONFESSION IS GOOD FOR THE SOUL.'

AFTER Isabel was established in her flat and had entertained company, she was drawn more and more into the round of social fashion. It was not 'the season,' as commonly understood, but Parliament was sitting, and the polite world was fairly full. Isabel came to be regarded as a 'success.' Certain leaders of fashion were pleased to set the seal of their approval on her; and Lady Padiham declared her 'perfectly charming,' and looked wistfully sometimes from her to her son, who, for his part, appeared quite content with the society and the conversation of his little Phemy. Isabel's fortune was not so much of a fortune as mere fortunes go—there are giddy young actresses who earn as much by twirling on their toes, and operatic songstresses who earn far more by their voices—but, added to Isabel's beauty and to Isabel's manners and attainments, it was a great deal.

Many gay young sparks fluttered round her at social gatherings, but they were speedily extinguished in her superior fire. The men who came round her and stayed were serious politicians, and eminent men of science and of letters; and it was whispered that a certain distinguished novelist was going to put her in a book; but the

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only reason for the whisper seemed to be that he talked very intimately with her for a long while one evening, and was observed to watch her closely when she was conversing with others.

Ainsworth was present at some of these gatherings—he received cards of invitation, he scarcely knew why—but the court he saw paid to Isabel was not eminently encouraging to his ambition. He thought modestly of his own merits, and every time he saw her with her court of admirers, when it was difficult to have a word with her, he resolved he would not accept another invitation; yet the next invitation he received he accepted, in the hope of seeing her and speaking with her.

Sometimes he heard things said about her which, for no reason in particular, he resented. On one occasion he stood near three ladies who talked of her.

‘How do you like Miss Raynor?’ said one.

‘She is very much admired,’ said another, not venturing an opinion of her own.

‘She is very much run after,’ said the third, more boldly—‘especially by men.’

‘Yes,’ said the first; ‘she is decidedly much more of a man’s woman than of a woman’s.’

Ainsworth could not quite say to himself, and he would have found it impossible to say to another, what harm there was in being ‘a man’s woman;’ but he did not like it.

Isabel, on her own part, was not free from troublesome feelings about Ainsworth. Early in these social dissipations she had experienced a singular shock. It was at a dinner at her uncle’s, where she had got into the habit of thinking her aunt, Phemy, and herself supreme. It was somewhat of a surprise to her to find Miss Bruno, the novelist, of the company, though—remembering her aunt’s words at her own house-warming—it was no surprise to see Ainsworth set down at dinner beside her; but as dinner progressed and Ainsworth and Miss Bruno appeared to become more and more interested in each other, appeared even to begin to exchange confidences, it became a positive pain to her to know that they were together! It was the first time she had seen Ainsworth in agreeable and confidential talk with another young woman than herself! Miss Bruno was not unattractive: she was a large, pale woman, with an abundance of fluffy straw-coloured hair. Isabel found herself asking the question, ‘Does he admire her?’ when the meaning of her feeling and the pain of it rose upon her in a blinding blush. Now she knew what her feeling for Ainsworth must be—that it was no longer mere friendliness—though when it had ceased to be that she could not guess—and that she desired to have him for her own, and could not endure to think he might be another’s, or might wish to be another’s!

The vividness of that feeling passed, of course, but the recognition of it remained. She frankly considered the whole matter, reviewed her intercourse with Ainsworth from the beginning, and came to the conclusion that Ainsworth loved her! That filled her heart with joy, till she considered also and completely understood his frequent girdings at her wealth. Might he not, in his absurd belief in the difference this wealth made between them—might he not turn from her in hopelessness of winning her? She resolved

that she would show him, more clearly than she had ever yet said, that this difference of wealth was less than nothing, and vanity. With more care and intention than before, she invited him to her house when she was going to entertain other guests, and sometimes she asked him alone; for he had fallen into the habit of calling seldom except when invited.

Suddenly such tête-à-tête hospitalities were threatened with interruption—in singular fashion.

Isabel’s father had so much improved in his habits—though, unhappily, but little in his health—that he now regularly occupied himself with writing. His daughter had assured him there was no longer necessity for doing hack-work or journalism, since she had enough money to provide for him and herself both, and therefore he had turned to fulfil the dream of his life: he had begun to write the great philosophic work that was to make him famous—‘A Defence of Transcendentalism’—a work the absolute need for which was evident in an age of mere utilitarian realism. Daily, therefore, he and Alexander—who remained faithful to his chief—journeyed to the British Museum, to rummage, make notes of authorities, and write *marginalia* in the Reading Room. His daughter saw him daily depart on these expeditions without anxiety, for not since the summer had he disappeared for an opium debauch, and she had therefore postponed an expensive experiment for his complete restoration which had been in her mind since ever her wealth had come to her. He still appeared sometimes loose-nerved and shaken, but she thought that condition was but the result of his persistent habit in the past, aggravated by his present regular application to work. Seeing him thus, Isabel was arranging to take him away for a week’s rest and change in the soft air of a southern watering-place, when one morning the unexpected happened.

Alexander had come, as usual, to accompany his chief to the British Museum. He sat with his hat on his knees, answering Isabel’s talk in unusually laconic and morose tones, waiting for the chief to appear. At length he came in, in a guise that amazed his daughter. His tall thin form was clothed in a long old ulster, from each pocket of which stuck the heel of a slipper. On his head was a travelling cap, the lappets of which dangled loosely over his ears. Under his arms he carried a book or two, tied together with string; and a bundle of manuscript, including his voluminous notes for his ‘Defence of Transcendentalism,’ also tied about and about with string; and on his arm hung an extra coat. When she saw him, Isabel burst into uncontrollable laughter, though there was a feeling of anxiety and vexation at her heart. Her father winced and frowned a little on being thus greeted.

‘Father dear,’ said she, going to him and laying her hand on his arm, ‘what on earth do you mean by this?’

‘Am I,’ said he, ‘so very ridiculous?’

‘No, no, my dear,’ said she. ‘Forgive me, but I could not help laughing at your unexpected appearance with all these impedimenta. What is the meaning of it?’

‘I am going away, my child. Comparatively naked came I to you six months ago, and com-

paratively naked do I depart. I am going away with nothing, my dear, that your bounty has conferred on me—nothing, I mean, that is detachable from myself.

‘Going away?’ said she. ‘But for how long?’

‘Going away altogether, my dear, to work out my own salvation.’

‘Work out your own salvation? What nonsense are you talking, father?’

‘To be explicit, my child.—I and Alexander have come to the conclusion that this gay, giddy life is not for us to lead. We must work and redeem the time. Besides, I am an anxiety and a burden to you.’

‘You and Alexander, I suppose,’ exclaimed she angrily, ‘wish to return to your old disreputable way of living!’

‘That, my child,’ said her father with a gentle sadness, ‘is an unkind thrust!’

‘It is unworthy of you, Miss Raynor,’ put in Alexander, ‘to say that!—But tell Miss Raynor the truth, sir.’

‘I beg, Alexander,’ said Mr Raynor, ‘that you will not interfere.’

Isabel was impatient and angry, but her anger was chastened and controlled by her abounding sense of the humour of the situation: while she seemed exceedingly serious and anxious, she was laughing in her heart.

‘I ought to lead, my dear,’ said her father, ‘and I wish to lead, peaceful, laborious days, uncharged with excitements: much eating and drinking, and contact with people of rank and fashion, do not agree with me. The world is too much with us here. I have a dream of peace through work, of rest through toil, and I wish to fulfil it.’

‘But, father dear,’ said Isabel, ‘can you not fulfil it here? You can be as quiet as you like. I thought you enjoyed seeing people and talking with them; and people certainly enjoy talking with you: again and again have I been complimented on having so clever a father. But if you don’t like seeing many people, my dear, then we shall see only few people—Mr Ainsworth and one or two more: and your days can be as peaceful and laborious as you will—though I think you have been making them a little too laborious lately.’

‘Let me advise you, sir,’ said Alexander, in his most portentously solemn tone, still nursing his hat on his knee, ‘to tell Miss Raynor the whole truth.’

‘Let me suggest, Alexander,’ said his chief, ‘that you should take a short walk and return in a quarter of an hour. By that time, I daresay, my interview with my daughter will be at an end.’

‘Very well,’ said Alexander, rising; ‘I will return in a quarter of an hour.’

‘My dear,’ said Mr Raynor, as soon as Alexander was gone, ‘I am a miserable sinner. I have never told you anything but truth, my child; I think I am incapable of *speaking* anything but the truth; but, my dear, I have been acting a lie!’ He set his *impedimenta* on the table and sat down, dropping his chin in dejection on his breast. ‘You have believed—I have induced you by my conduct to believe—that I have given up the use of that detestable drug: I have not, my dear. I have not used it openly in the

form of opium since the summer, but secretly I have taken it since ever you took me to the Isle of Man, in the form of laudanum. I began it there—I could not live without the detested stuff—and I have not since intermitted more than a day or two without a dose of it.’

‘Oh, my poor father!’ said she, kneeling by him and taking his hand. ‘What a bond-slave to a deadly habit you have made yourself!’

‘Bond-slave indeed, my dear!’ he assented. ‘Bound with bonds more intangible than gossamer, but more enduring than thongs or chains!’ And he showed, even in that moment, an evident relish of his phrases.

‘And what were you intending to do, my poor dear?’ said his daughter, with tears in her eyes. ‘Where were you intending to go?’

‘Alexander was going to find a lodging,’ said he, turning on her helplessly his large appealing eyes; ‘and I was going away to work till my book was done, and then to lie down and die! My continued existence is a burden and a shame to the earth! And yet I once had great schemes!’ he added with a wondering pathos.

‘But, dear father,’ said Isabel, caressing his hand, ‘how could you work in a poverty-stricken lodging, after having had comfort and plenty, alone, after you have been used to cheerful society, and with that habit growing tighter about you? You do not understand yourself, my dear. You have confessed to me, and now we will take counsel together what must be done. Why did you not tell me before, dear? Have I been unkind to you? Have I been neglecting you? No, no. I hope I have not.’

‘No, no, my child!’ said he, while tears sprang in his eyes and flowed weakly down his cheeks. ‘No! If anything could save me, your love would, my child! It embraces and compasses me all about!’

‘Well, dear,’ said she soothingly, ‘we must now think of something to be done to deliver you from this.’

‘“O wretched man that I am!”’ he murmured, shaking his head. ‘“Who will deliver me?” This new form of the habit is worse than the other! It is always with me! I sometimes sit in horror—deadly horror!—of the degradation and the blighted utility of my life!’

‘But to think such things,’ said his daughter, ‘is only morbid! Hopelessness of that kind is paralyzing! And in any case you must not think of leaving me alone! I am determined, my dear, to see you yet free and strong! And to gain that end I will spend all I have, if it is necessary! Don’t you think, father, it would be wise to take the advice of a clever doctor?’

‘Oh, not a doctor, my child!’ exclaimed her father in something like terror.

‘Well, shall we talk the matter over with Mr Ainsworth? You would not like to take Uncle George into counsel. He is good and kind; but he does not understand your case.’

‘Yes,’ said he, with something like cheerfulness, ‘let us talk it over with Ainsworth.’

So, when Alexander returned, he was despatched with a note to Ainsworth, at the office of his newspaper, requesting him to call as soon as he could. He sent back word that he would

not be free till two o'clock, but that he would set out then.

Ainsworth came to his time, and the case was set forth to him. What did he think should be done? What would he advise?

'Most people,' said he, 'have opinions ready about the treatment of everything, from a pimple to an earthquake. I, too, have opinions, but I think that in this case they are worth nothing. I would suggest that the proper thing to do first is to see a competent doctor.'

'In fact,' said Isabel, 'you are like the man in Charles Lamb's story: you advise that we should take some advice.'

Isabel spoke lightly, on purpose to reassure her father and make him feel more at ease.

'Quite so,' said Ainsworth. 'Dr Sandringham is said to be a very good man. He is to be seen, I believe, up to four o'clock. There is no time for action like the present: suppose we go at once?'

Mr Raynor, having Isabel's opinion corroborated by Ainsworth's, agreed to see a doctor; and a cab was called, and he was being driven—in the company of his daughter and Ainsworth—to Dr Sandringham's, before he had time to turn round. Isabel and her father entered the doctor's consulting-room together, while Ainsworth remained in the waiting-room. Then Isabel came out and waited also, while the doctor interviewed Mr Raynor for half an hour alone. At the end of that time he emerged radiant with hope: such virtue is there in the word of one with authority.

'He says I'll get over it!' he exclaimed, straightening himself. 'And he wants to speak to you, my dear.'

Isabel entered the presence of the doctor again, filled with curiosity and hope.

'Your father's is a most interesting case, Miss Raynor,' said he. 'I am all the more hopeful of it because he is a man of quick imagination. I think we can cure him of his habit; but—the cure, I tell you frankly, will be rather expensive—a matter of six or seven hundred pounds a year. Is that beyond you?'

'Oh no,' said Isabel. 'I will gladly pay whatever is necessary. What must be done?'

'There is a doctor who takes two or three patients in his house on the Surrey hills: I recommend him to go there.'

'Go away from under my care?' exclaimed Isabel.

'It is much better that he should be from under your care, my dear young lady. He will be taken complete and thoughtful care of by a scientific man who will understand him. You need be under no apprehension, I assure you, that he will not be taken care of.'

'Does he approve of going away himself?'

'Quite,' answered the doctor promptly.

'Then,' answered Isabel, 'I have no more to say. When should he go?'

'As soon as it can be arranged. I will telegraph to Dr Skelton to be here to-morrow. I will tell him all I think of it, and then he will come on to you. I am glad to hear that your father is engaged on a philosophic work: he will be best employed. And, permit me to suggest—keep from him all particulars of outlay of money: I can see it would prey on him very much if he thought he were a great expense.'

So the three drove back to Isabel's abode, discussing cheerfully her father's going. He was enamoured of his prospect.

'Though,' said he, 'I shall miss the Museum. What shall I do for books for my work?'

'We will get you a subscription at the London Library,' said Ainsworth; 'and I—or Miss Raynor—will bring you a bundle of books once a week, or when you will.'

'That will do very well,' said Isabel.

'But what,' said Mr Raynor, 'is to become of Alexander? My poor Alexander!—he is a faithful creature! He has been with me for years!—a true friend!'

'I will look after him, father,' said Isabel, 'as much as he will let me.'

'And what services of his Miss Raynor does not need,' said Ainsworth, 'I will secure. He shall be my Patroclus, my *fidus Achates*, as he has been yours, Mr Raynor.'

Thus they talked on the way; and Ainsworth, though he felt he ought to have been at work earning gold to bring his 'queen of gold' nearer to him, abandoned himself to the delight of this brief, bright interval, which reminded him of the Marylebone days when they had all been gay and easy friends together.

And thus it came about that Mr Raynor went away to be cured, and that tête-à-tête meetings between Isabel and Ainsworth ceased for a time.

HOW TO TAKE OUT A PATENT.

BY AN OLD PATENTEE.

To take out a Patent for the invention of a machine or some mechanical combination, or for the discovery of some new chemical or manufacturing process, was a serious business long ago. But we have changed all that of late years, thanks to those who advocated for so long and so persistently a 'Reform of the Patent Laws'; and also to the influence of the Great Exhibition of 1851. The result was the passing of the Patent Amendment Act of 1852, and of a subsequent Act in 1883. Later legislation on the subject is contained in the Patent Act, 1888, and the Patent Rules, 1890.

Estimated roughly, the cost of taking out a patent now, securing the invention for the first four years, is nearly represented by pence, but under the old Act it was represented by pounds. To such readers as have an inventive faculty and who would like to take out their own patents, I venture to think that I may be of some service, and this in the way of giving hints directly and practically useful, which will enable them to get their inventions secured by letters-patent at a very moderate cost.

The real difficulty with which you, my inventive reader, will have to contend lies in the direction of your own work—namely, the preparation of your drawings, the drawing up of your specifications, and the making of your 'claims.' Having matured your invention, so far as you can at the early stages of its existence, the first step you should take is to ascertain

whether your invention is 'new.' This, if done at all, should be done before you proceed to make 'Application for Provisional Protection.' But as going back through the Patent Office Records of years to find and glance over all specifications of patents for inventions bearing on the subject of yours takes much time, and as time is money, you may, as many do—the 'fees' being now so small—dispense with the 'search' altogether. You run this risk, however, that some morning after having applied for Provisional Protection, or at a later stage for completion of your patent, you may receive an official document informing you that some one has given 'notice of opposition to (your) grant for provisional protection,' or to your 'patent,' as the case may be. Should you in this case elect 'not to fight,' but rather to drop the patent, the loss in fees paid, say even for protection for the first four years, is not very great. But remember that there are patents worth fighting for; I myself have at least one over which I should be inclined to be somewhat pugnacious. But if you fight, take my advice. Do not fight unaided; secure the services of a first-class patent agent. Patent business is now of such enormous extent that every town of importance has at least one first-class patent agent.

But if, to be as safe as you can make yourself, you decide to make the 'search,' that is now, as compared with the old and costly system, a comparatively easy task, since the complete specifications of all the patents which are taken out each year are *printed*, and complete sets of these are kept in certain places of easy access to the public. The public offices in which complete sets can be examined are as follows: In London, the Patent Office Library in 25 Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane; and at the Department of Science and Art, South Kensington. In Edinburgh, at the Museum of Science and Art. In Dublin, in the Public Record Office.

Assuming that you elect to go on with your patent without making a 'search,' your first work is the preparation of the 'specification'—as it is officially termed—or description of the invention. The worth of the invention lies in truth in this document. A doubtful phrase in it, the employment of a wrong term, the omission of one sentence, the giving of another, may wreck the patent, may give a loophole to the sharp, perhaps over-sharp and unscrupulous, some of whom are always on the look-out for an opportunity to set the patentee at defiance, or subject him to vexatious and costly litigation in defending his rights. And of this document the most important part is that in which all the 'claims' are stated.

Then, again, with regard to the drawings—here assuming that your invention is a mechanical one—you must be careful in preparing them for 'sending in to the Patent Office,' that they clearly and explicitly set forth the character of the machine, or the nature of the particular mechanical combination claimed. 'Pretty' or 'nice-looking' drawings, such as youthful draughtsmen are usually ambitious to produce, are not required. Indeed, the style in which the officials require them to be executed precludes this fineness of drawing. What is wanted is

absolute clearness in showing what it is which you claim as your invention.

The specifications required under the Patent Office régime are of two kinds or classes—first, the 'Provisional,' and second, the 'Complete.' Of these the provisional, as its name partly imports, has for its object the securing to the inventor the 'right' to a patent if accepted officially and not opposed. This 'right' prevents another from taking undue advantage of the inventor, or his being forestalled by some one who may be thinking of something of the same sort, and of protecting it by patent. But the official acceptance of the provisional specification, or the granting of what is officially termed 'provisional protection,' brings with it three other and important advantages. In the first place it gives you nine months, during which period you may be making inquiries as to the probable chances of your invention meeting with commercial success. The second, and possibly the greatest advantage to many inventors is this. The inventor may not have the means to do justice to his patent if it be finally accepted. Or it may be that the bringing out and manufacturing expenses may amount to such a sum that he will be compelled to get the help of a capitalist. Now, his provisional protection secures him from the risks which a patentee ran under the old patent laws arising from those to whom he showed his invention in confidence. The third advantage which accrues to the inventor from the provisional protection which he obtains is that the period of nine months which it gives him can be employed in maturing and perfecting his invention. Those nine months of grace begin from the *date of the application* for provisional protection which the inventor sends in, *not* from the date of its official acceptance. Practically, the nine months is reduced to about seven.

The second class of specification recognised under Patent Office régime is that known as the 'Complete.' A provisional specification differs from a complete in those two points: in the first place, all that is demanded from it is such a fairly complete description of what the invention actually is, that there will be no doubt as to what the inventor desires to secure by patent. The full details, making clear the method in which the invention is to be carried out, are not required. All these are reserved for the Complete Specification, in which they *must* be given. The second characteristic of a provisional as compared with a complete specification is—that it is not imperative that the inventor should state what are the '*claims*' which he makes. These, again, are reserved for the complete specification, in which also they *must* appear.

Although the two kinds of specification now described differ in most important points, it is not essentially necessary that both should be sent into the Patent Office. The provisional specification may be altogether dispensed with, and the complete one sent in at the first. Each specification—provisional and complete—must be sent in 'in duplicate'—that is, two copies of specifications, and two sets of drawings, are now required, in place of four under the other method, in which you take out both 'provisional' and 'complete' specifications.

Assuming that you have got your scheme so

far matured that you are prepared to apply for a provisional specification, you will now be ready to prepare the finished official form to be forwarded to the Patent Office. The paper, of the size known as foolscap, must be strong and of good quality, and be wide ruled, with a margin of two inches on the left-hand side of the page. The style of handwriting best liked by the officials is clear, round, and large, so as to be distinctly read off at once. In paging your office copy, the first page must *not* be '1,' but '2,' and this inasmuch as the stamped and printed form presently to be described forms in the official arrangement 'page 1.' All the sheets of the specification are to be secured or fastened consecutively together at the left-hand upper corner. The provisional specification concludes thus: 'As witness my hand this ——— day of ——— One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety ———.' Finally, you sign with your full name.

Having thus got ready your provisional specification for sending in to the Patent Office, you must now address yourself to getting your drawings prepared. There are two sizes of sheets allowed by the Patent Office. The first size, which is that preferred, is thirteen inches by eight. The second size of sheet is thirteen by sixteen inches. There must be a margin of half an inch in width set off on the sides and ends. The quality of the drawing-paper you employ must be good—strong, pure white in colour, and hot-pressed or calendered so as to present a smooth surface. There is no limit placed to the number of the sheets of drawings you may send in along with your specification. The sheets are tagged at the corner along with, and *after*, the specification. Colour or Indian-ink washes should only be used when absolutely necessary, drawings in pure outline being preferred by the office. When 'hatching' or cross-lines are employed to indicate parts of the subjects which are shown in section, the lines must be 'drawn in' pretty widely apart. 'Shade-lines'—that is, broad and dark lines to indicate parts in projection or for effect—should only be used when absolutely necessary. Letters of reference must not be of less height than one-eighth of an inch; and when the part indicated is small and would be rendered obscure by so large a sized letter being superimposed upon it, the reference letter must be placed outside the drawing on the free space of paper, with a dotted line, if necessary, to the part to which the letter of reference applies. The lines of the drawings and all the reference letters must be made permanent in Indian or China ink, of a deep, absolutely black colour. The sheets should also be numbered consecutively, and the various figures marked Fig. 1, Fig. 2, &c. The scale of the drawings must be large enough to make all the points or details of your invention clearly understood beyond any doubt. It is absolutely essential that the 'scale' be drawn, not merely indicated in words.

Having thus all your documents ready to hand, you are now prepared to make application in the official form. The first step in this will be for you to obtain the stamped form marked 'A,' and the Form 'B,' which is unstamped, and is otherwise a duplicate of Form 'A.' The cost of Form

'A' is one pound sterling (Form 'B' not being charged). It may be obtained through any money order post-office in the kingdom within three or four days from the date of application. Some of the General Post-offices in large towns generally keep all the patent forms in stock. Forms may also be obtained through the medium of Inland Revenue offices. Having obtained your two forms, you proceed to fill up their blank spaces. The filling up of the forms is completed when you adhibit your signature, and the day of the month and the year on which you signed the document.

If the space in the *printed* form for the 'general description' is too small to take in its matter, condensed to the full as you will try to make it, you must *not* 'continue' it by going 'over' and writing on the back of the form. But you must take one of your specification paper sheets—with its margin—and continue and conclude your general description on it, if the length of its matter will permit of its conclusion. If it does not, you must take another and second sheet. The printed 'form' is considered officially to be 'Page 1,' so that if you can get in your 'general description' into its blank space, the first page of your written provisional specification will commence with the number or figure '2.' If you have two extra sheets or pages, it will then be '3.' The documents should be accompanied with a courteous note, addressed—as also the packet—to 'The Comptroller-general, Patent Office, 25 Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.' And here, in justice to a class of whose members harsh things are sometimes spoken, I venture to say, speaking from experience, that the Patent officials are both courteous and considerate.

In due course you will receive a printed form acknowledging receipt of your documents; and probably, within six or eight weeks after the date of your application, you will receive a notification of the acceptance or refusal of your application. You will now, as already stated, have nine months—less the time taken in getting your provisional acceptance—to mature your invention, also to make such inquiries as will enable you to decide whether you should go on with it or not.

Assuming that your invention is too good a one to be thrown up, you will, of course, in ample time begin to prepare your 'Complete Specification' for filing at the Patent Office. Bear carefully in mind the date at which you ought to lodge your complete specification. A *single hour after the date* will make your patent void. It is right, however, to state that official provision is made for your being placed under such circumstances as will prevent you from lodging your complete specification before the appointed or legal date. Such, for example, as your having instituted some trials or experiments which you should like to see the result of, so that you might embody in your documents some improvements which would greatly enhance the value of your patent. By the payment of certain fees, running from two to six pounds, you can obtain 'extension of time' in which to file your final document—an extension varying from one to three months. But be careful to note this—that your application for this extension must

itself be made in time. A detailed statement of your 'claims' forms the last paragraph of the complete specification. They are preceded by the following introductory paragraph: 'Having now particularly described and ascertained the nature of my said invention, and in what manner the same is to be performed, and declare that what I claim is:'

Then follows the statement of claims. Each claim is numbered, as (1), (2), &c., and each forms a distinct and complete paragraph. Although the validity of your patent is dependent on the complete specification taken as a whole, nevertheless much rests also upon the 'claims' you make. I ought, indeed, the rather to say 'very much;' for it is the claims which differentiate your invention from that of others proposing to do the same work, or having the same purpose in view. At the same time, the utmost care should be taken not to include claims which might or would go beyond what you conceive or believe to be actually new.

Arrived at this stage of your application for protection by patent for your invention, you are now ready to purchase the next form required to complete it. This is known in the official list as 'Form C,' the stamp on which is of the value of three pounds sterling. By paying this amount to the Postmaster at the nearest Money Order Office, the form will be received in a few days after the payment has been made. It is accompanied by a duplicate form unstamped, and for which no charge is made.

Form C has then to be filled up precisely in the same way as the provisional specification. But the number of the patent, and the date of its application given in the acceptance document, must be referred to in the complete specification. The form and the pages of what may be called the text of the specification, and the drawing or drawings, if any, are then to be sewed together, making two sets, one set carrying the stamped Form C, the other the duplicate form, unstamped. Then, as in the case of the provisional specification, carefully make up the packet and despatch it.

Let me hope that your acceptance will be followed some fine morning by an official envelope containing your 'Patent Grant,' officially signed and sealed, with a printed note informing you that it is now forwarded, and directing your attention to the way in which, and the dates at which the succeeding payments are to be made in order to prevent your patent from lapsing and 'becoming void.'

The full period over which your patent gives you protection for your invention is fourteen years, commencing on the date of your application for provisional protection. The cost of protection for the first four years is covered by the two forms 'A' and 'C,' amounting together to four pounds. Before the expiry of the fourth year from date of application you must pay the first renewal fee of five pounds. Before the expiration of the fifth year, and in respect to the sixth year, you will have to pay six pounds. The succeeding payments, before the expiration of the sixth up to and inclusive of the fourteenth year, are eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, and fourteen pounds. Thus, beginning with four pounds for the first four years, each year's payment rises one pound in value. The total amount paid for the fourteen

years is ninety-nine pounds, and embraces the three kingdoms and the Isle of Man, but not the Channel Islands, or any of the British possessions or colonies.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

A MARSHLAND ROMANCE.

By THOMAS ST E. HAKE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—THE MISTY NIGHT.

THE boom of a signal-gun shivered across the marshlands in the lower reaches of the Thames. It was a damp, wintry afternoon; and over these fenny levels, that extend for miles along the river-banks and far inland, with their narrow dikes, stunted pollards, and bleary-eyed cattle dotted here and there, a white mist was rising. It had already risen above the dikes, it had settled round the pollards up to their stumpy heads, and the cattle were grazing below it, or else ruminating, apparently accustomed to their misty surroundings.

On a slope behind these marshlands there is many a straggling village. One of these is known as Little Thurrock. It straggles back from the swamps, as if it had picked its way out of them, and stooped at the foot of the old chalk hills. The clock in the square tower of Little Thurrock Church—a tower that looks almost as old as the hills behind it—was striking four. Its chimes had hardly died away when the joyous shouts of the village school children filled the air. Out they flocked with hurrying footsteps from the school-house adjoining. The school-door had been flung open like a safety-valve for steam at high pressure, and the sound of children's voices had come bursting forth.

At a raised desk within the school-room sat a girl of eighteen. She leaned her elbows upon the desk and stared abstractedly before her. On a bench below the desk was a curly-headed boy, who watched the girl's face intently.

'They're firing agin!' he presently ventured to suggest. 'It's from the hulks; ain't it?'

The school-mistress looked severe—if a frown on so sweet a face could be called severe—and answered: 'Mind you don't go there, Jim, when you grow up. It seems to me that you are going that way.'

The boy hung his head. But he soon looked up again to find the girl more abstracted than ever. 'May I go now?'

The girl looked at him with a flash of her dark eyes: 'What!—to the hulks?'

'No,' said Jim. 'May I go home, I mean?'

'You will never'—and the girl could scarcely suppress a smile—'never play at convicts in school-hours again?'

The boy shook his head with energy.

'Then you may go. But'—

'Good-night, miss!'

A skip and a jump, and Jim had reached the door. In another minute his voice was mingling with the other voices that were now growing less audible in the lanes and bypaths, as the children scattered into their various homeward ways.

For a moment there was a thoughtful look on the girl's face; but her eyes brightened as she locked up her books and papers; and when she had put on her bonnet and cloak, she hurried out with hardly less eagerness than her noisy pupils. She did not shout or dance along, however, as they had done, though she felt a strong impulse to whirl round and round on tiptoe into the mist. The night was closing in; a light wind was creeping up from the river, and driving the mist before it in shadowy, fantastic shapes. A curlew passed high over the girl's head in swift flight, delivering its plaintive cry.

The girl began to sing blithely, and now seemed almost to be dancing as she tripped quickly on her way. She gave no apparent heed to the repeated sound of the gun that came to her ear over the darkening marshes; it was a sound to which she had been accustomed since childhood. It did not interrupt her singing or cause her to walk along less buoyantly. Indeed, she moved so nimbly that she hardly appeared to touch the ground. She was tall and shapely, and with her long gray cloak wrapped about her, she appeared as though fading, as the light faded overhead, into a lively spirit of the mist. She soon left the village behind her, and descending obliquely towards the marshlands, presently came in sight of a cottage standing alone at the road-side. A light had appeared at one of the windows, and at the sight of it she hastened her steps still more. A low stone wall surrounded the garden. The girl passed in at a gateway, and turning down a side-path, reached a back door. She raised the latch and went in. She found herself in a neatly furnished kitchen. A middle-aged, rosy-faced woman, with a peevish look, was busying herself over the tea-tray.

'Father is in?'

'He is, miss. But he ain't in the best o' tempers,' was the answer, 'I can tell you.'

Without further questioning, the girl passed through the kitchen into a snug little parlour. An elderly man sat in a comfortable armchair before the fire; a shaded lamp stood on a table at his elbow. The light fell upon a handsome, delicate face; but there was little that could be called cheery in the expression; and the gray hair and dark bushy eyebrows only added to the look of sternness. There was no deep sympathy in the cold gray eyes. The man, indeed, scarcely looked up when the girl came in; and even when she kissed him playfully on both cheeks, he kept his eyes bent upon the fire. And yet he seemed to be watching her in a stealthy way all the while from under those convenient eyebrows.

'No letter for me, father?' The girl asked the question in an unsteady voice. She waited with parted lips and wide-open eyes for a reply. He looked up now, but not at her. He looked sternly at the woman who happened at this moment to come bustling in with the tray.

'Do you hear, Mrs Gilkes? You brought me the letters this morning. Any for Miss Jessie?'

The severe tone in which he questioned her appeared to flurry Mrs Gilkes, for she answered in a stammering manner; 'Letters? I gave them all to you, sir, without so much as glancing

at 'em. Any for Miss Jessie? Why, no—not that I knows of, Mr Bryce.'

'You know there were none,' said Mr Bryce. 'Don't I always send you up to the school with them, when there are any, the moment I can spare you?'

'You do, sir.' Then answering Jessie's appealing look, Mrs Gilkes went on: 'But what with one thing, as you know, and what with another—'

'You can go, Mrs Gilkes,' interposed Mr Bryce.—'You don't want her any longer; do you, Jess?'

Jess followed the woman out into the kitchen. She looked deeply troubled; but she brushed a tear from her flushed cheek, and said, laughingly: 'Jim has been naughty again, Mrs Gilkes. His mind is always running on convicts; I'm afraid he's quite incorrigible.'

Mrs Gilkes, who was Jim's mother, looked as shame-faced, upon hearing this unsatisfactory report, as though she were a convict herself. She put on her bonnet and shawl in her flurried manner, and answered, half-apologetically: 'He always is a bit queer, my Jim is, when they're a-firing for convicts. I'm given summat that way myself. They was a-firing the night afore my Jim was born; so it's in his nature like, you'll understand?'

When Jess had bolted the door behind Mrs Gilkes, her face instantly changed. The brightness went out of her laughing eyes. She seemed like one who could no longer keep back the disappointment and consequent grief that had overtaken her. 'No letter from him yet? What can it mean?' She stood with her hands clasped, looking blankly before her. She looked the picture of despondency, with ripe, red quivering lips, and a bright tear rolling down each cheek.

'Jess!' It was her father. She made an effort to recover her cheerful look; she knew that he hated the sight of tears. He expected every one about him to be bright and chatty; and he seldom had reason to complain of Jess. But to-night—as she found it impossible to hide from him—she felt in no amiable frame of mind. Something weighed heavily upon her spirits—something that seemed more than a mere presentiment, something that she could not put aside.

'When you've done gossiping,' said he, as she entered the room, 'perhaps you'll make the tea.'

She set to work in silence. Her father watched her movements in his cunning way. He did not appear perplexed at finding her so uncommunicative, though it was by no means a usual mood with her. He appeared more anxious than perplexed about Jess to-night.

'Well,' said he, when she had handed him his cup and had fallen back into a state of abstraction, 'you are not very entertaining.'

The girl looked up suddenly at her father with searching eyes. 'I am trying to think,' said she, 'why John does not write.'

Her father made no answer. But he frowned, and fidgeted in his chair, and plainly showed that there was little entertainment, in his opinion, to be got out of that subject. He even made more than one effort to rise from his chair, as if with the thought of pacing up and down the room;

but he was too indolent, as well as too gouty and rheumatic, to get upon his feet without considerable provocation.

'Father!' cried the girl, with a restless look in her eyes, 'I must know the meaning of John's silence; I can bear it no longer!'

Mr Bryce's face became troubled. But it was evident that John's silence was not the cause; it was Jessie's impulsive and determined manner.

'Patience, Jess,' said he, in a conciliatory tone—'patience!'

'Patience?' said the girl, jumping up from her chair. 'I have shown too much patience! I have followed your advice. I have waited—waited! I ought to have followed my own instinct long ago. I hope it is not yet too late.'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean,' said the girl, 'that when no answer came to my appeal—not one word of reply to all my letters—I should have gone straight to London. But you dissuaded me. I should have gone and learned what his silence meant; for I will not believe that he is changed towards me, unless he tells me so. A letter from him would not convince me; nothing would now, except his own outspoken confession.'

Mr Bryce began to exhibit so much uneasiness, his eyes wandering from one object in the room to another, that Jessie must have noticed it, if she had been less self-absorbed.

'To-morrow,' said Jess, 'I shall go to town.—It's no use trying to dissuade me now,' she hastened to add, noticing a sudden movement on her father's part, as though he were about to interrupt her. 'It's Saturday; there will be no school. And if you refuse to give me the money for the journey, father, I shall walk!'

Her father looked at her straight for the first time. She returned his glance, and was surprised to see no sign of anger, or even opposition. She saw something worse—she saw a look of actual dread.

'Jess,' said he, making a great effort to steady his voice, 'you can go to London if you like. I don't grudge you the money. But you will do no good, my girl, by going there.'

Jess was dumfounded. Her father's answer was so unexpected; his changed attitude bewildered her. Suddenly she broke out in her impulsive way: 'Something has happened!' She looked about her distractedly, as if for some explanation. 'Something has happened!' she repeated. 'You knew it. You have kept it from me!' Jessie spoke in a tone of bitter reproach. A burst of anger would have touched her father less keenly.

He broke out in a weak, pleading voice. 'It was done for the best—all for the best,' said he. 'Jessie! you shall know everything, my dear—everything.'

She pressed her hands before her eyes. 'He cannot be dead?' She asked the question as though slowly realising that something even worse must have come to pass.

'Sit down,' her father insisted. 'I will tell you in a few words what has really occurred.'

She obeyed; and leaning her elbows on the table, with her head between her restless hands, she waited eagerly for him to speak.

'John Upcraft got into difficulties,' Mr Bryce began—'weeks ago. It led to legal proceedings.

There was a trial—it lasted for some days—and, in a word, he was found guilty.'

Jess rubbed her eyes. 'Guilty?' and she looked about her, as if doubting whether she was awake. 'Guilty of what?'

'Why, you see,' said Mr Bryce, trying to get delicately over the avowal, 'the case was a serious one—very serious. It had to be dealt with in the criminal courts. For the accusation brought against Upcraft was one of forgery. In fact—Shall I go on?'

'No!' There was determination in Jessie's tone. What more was there to hear? A look of horror settled upon her face. Her father bent his head and wisely remained silent.

'He wrote to me—didn't he?' Jess presently asked in a choking voice. 'He *must* have written!—Where are his letters?'

Still silent—never even glancing towards her—Mr Bryce rose slowly from his armchair and went to his desk under the window. He unlocked a drawer and brought out a packet of letters.

Jess took them eagerly in both her hands. But the sight of John Upcraft's familiar handwriting was more than she could bear to look upon unmoved. The letters were unopened—had remained unanswered for weeks! What would he think of her? The self-questioning brought a flood of tears.

'These newspapers,' said her father, taking a bundle from the same drawer, 'contain an account of the whole case. When you have read them, Jessie, you will have learned all.' While still speaking, he hobbled to his armchair and sank down.

The girl was on the point of leaving him. She stopped, with her hand upon the door, and looked back. There was suppressed anger in her tone, but her eyes flashed at him with passion as she asked: 'Why did you keep all this from me?'

Mr Bryce looked nervously into his daughter's face. 'Shall I be candid? Well, then! I did not feel sure of you, Jess, you are so impulsive. I dreaded—and the dread kept me awake many a night—that if you knew of this business, you would throw up your situation at Thurrock School. And that, I knew,' he added, 'would mean ruin—starvation. For am I not poor and afflicted?'

By profession, Mr Bryce was a surgeon; but his ailments—so he told every one—had forced him to retire from practice. He had given Jess a good education, however, before retiring: he had even had her trained for a nurse at the county hospital. He was poor, as he had avowed—wretchedly poor. But Jessie's earnings at the village school, and his own slight savings, just enabled them to meet the expenses of their modest home.

For a moment, after her father had ceased speaking, Jess stood looking at him more in pity than anger. His want of heart—his unsympathetic, selfish nature, was well known to her. But she had thought to receive some words of commiseration. It was inconceivable to her. He appeared indifferent, so long as his comforts were secure. What this calamity meant for her seemed to give him no concern. She sat down over the kitchen fire to read the letters. She felt eager to break the seals; and yet the dread

that they would confirm what her father had so reluctantly told her, made her hesitate. She could no more believe John Upercraft guilty than believe that his love for her had changed.

In the midst of these thoughts the noise of the signal-gun smote faintly upon her ear. To-night, she felt a strange fascination for the sound. The wretched convicts down in the prison-ships, on the banks of the marshlands, had a new interest for her. There was one of these men, there could be little question, out in the foggy marshlands now. She had seen one of them once; it was a year or two ago; and the whole scene recurred to her. The man had been hunted down by a company of soldiers, and retaken. They had passed the cottage on their way to the river: Jess had seen the convict's face by the light of flaring torches as they went by; and never had she forgotten the man's look, though it had only flashed upon her for one moment.

And this was now John Upercraft's fate. He was lying in some damp prison-ship, perhaps, while she sat thinking—thinking beside this warm fire!

At this moment there came a continuous knocking at the kitchen door.

THE IMPORTED LIVE-MEAT TRADE.

In the early days of 1874, a small quantity of beef, mutton, and poultry was shipped from Canada to England. The consignment was but an insignificant one, containing as it did some twelve tons in all; but viewed in the light of later developments, the shipment was most important, for it ushered in a trade that now provides us with one of the most necessary elements of our imported food-supply. This beef, the pioneer of vast cargoes that were to follow, found ready sale at from sixpence to sevenpence per pound, and left a handsome margin of profit when the initial cost of threepence per pound, freight, and other expenses were paid.

The news of the success attaching to this venture soon became noised abroad, and, from dead-meat to live being a perfectly easy and natural transition to the commercial mind, the September of 1874 saw the arrival of 273 live cattle from Canada, a total which was increased to 455 before the close of the season. Prior to this date, the only foreign market for Canadian cattle was the United States, which levied an *ad-valorem* duty of twenty per cent. on every beast imported. The British market, however, was the better one, and as the freight across the Atlantic was about equal to the tax which had to be paid on admission to the States, it is small wonder that the most sanguine expectations were formed as to the possibilities of the trade.

The first consignment of Canadian cattle brought on an average thirty-two pounds per head, and the cost of conveyance to England amounted to six pounds per head—a sum that has now fallen to about one-third or one-fourth of that amount. Canada was not allowed, however, to reap the

whole benefit of this lucrative business. The States began to send cattle also. But at first much opposition was experienced. The English producers cried out most bitterly against what they considered an invasion of their vested interests. The roast beef of Old England was in danger, and, strange to say, the public sentiment was for a time aroused against the trade. The incalculable benefits which a supply of good beef conferred—for experiment proved it to be of the best quality—soon overcame the prejudice, and the British consumer consoled himself with the thought that if his beef was not exactly a home-grown product, it was at least killed and dressed on English ground.

The most serious objection made to the trade, however, was the danger of contagion to English stock; and to guard against this, the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act was passed in 1877. By this law, all cattle coming from a country where disease is known to be, must be slaughtered at the port of landing within ten days after they are disembarked. This produced some important modifications in the trade, for in those days refrigeration was a science that was in its earliest infancy, and dead meat could only be carried in the winter season. The passing of the Act therefore necessitated that all cattle sent from an infected area should be fat and ready for the market. Milch and store beasts would thus be comparatively valueless unless they were fattened on the other side of the Atlantic. The United States were soon scheduled as infected; but Canada remained free, and her cattle could be sent inland to fairs and markets. In 1883, trade jealousies made a desperate attempt to prove that Canada contained disease. The allegation, however, was denied, and the most searching examinations failed to prove that the live importations from Canada were other than sound in wind and limb. On the 21st November last, Canada was also scheduled, one single case sufficing to bring this about; and until the restriction is removed, her cattle are subject to the same rigorous rules as apply to those imported from the States.

Liverpool's share in the vast traffic that supplies the British consumer with much of his beef far exceeds that of any other port, and the provisions which her Docks and Harbour Board have made for the requirements of the business are on the most complete scale. In fact, the Mersey cattle-trade is second to none in the world; and it may give some idea of its magnitude to remark that at the more important of its two 'lairages,' the highest record of animals slaughtered on a single day is in excess of eighteen hundred.

There are several vessels among Liverpool's cattle-fleet that carry with perfect comfort and safety a thousand head of cattle, and the average loss per cent. all the year round is but one-half, or, in other words, one beast out of every two hundred dies on shipboard. Cattle-carrying has now attained the dignity of a science; and one has but to observe the condition of the bovine passengers as they are landed to see how healthy is the treatment which they must have received during their voyage.

On arrival in the Mersey, the cattle-laden steamer proceeds, we will suppose, to the Woodside Cattle-stage, which is on the Cheshire side of the river, immediately opposite to Liverpool. Here the cattle are landed amid the persuasions, vocal and otherwise, of the cattle-men, or 'bull-pushers,' as the vernacular of the trade denominates those who have had charge of them during the voyage. From the stage they proceed direct into the lairage, where there is stall accommodation—and this is only one of two lairages devoted to the American live-meat trade—for 3500 head. Very comfortable, indeed, are the quarters in which the cattle now find themselves. Their inviting coolness, the all-pervading sense of cleanliness, combined with the suggestiveness of the sweet-smelling hay, would lure the most refractory of bullocks to enter, even were the door-posts inscribed in characters intelligible to the bovine understanding with the warning, 'Abandon hope, all ye who enter here.'

Each animal is allowed food, bedding, and fresh water *ad libitum*—advantages of which it takes full benefit, thinking but little, as it chews the cud of reflection, of the fate now so closely impending. Perhaps the most striking feature of this vast collection of live-meat is the individual resemblance that obtains between each. All are plump, well-fed bullocks, of much the same height and proportions; and each thinks, no doubt—if it be given to him to think at all—that he has lighted upon good times. So he has undoubtedly, while they last. The transitoriness of things terrestrial, however, is proverbial, and applies to conditions bovine as well as human. After a few days spent in this peaceful and quiet retirement, there enters to the bullocks the buyer, who, with the skilled eye of the connoisseur, makes selection of the beasts he requires. He then takes from his pocket a pair of scissors, and shears from the hide a small portion of the hair, so as to leave a bald cross, a circular patch, or a triangle, according to the device he has adopted as his mark. This is the signing of the death-warrant. The selected beasts are led out into the open and penned at the entrance to one of the many slaughter-houses. The end is near now. A sliding door is pushed back, and one by one the beasts are led into the shambles. Here, in a few moments, all is over; and in as many minutes more, the beast that entered full of life and vigour is killed, divided, and dressed ready for the market.

A party of English tourists were once being shown over a great hog-killing establishment at Chicago, when an American present boasted, with all the complacency of wanton utilitarianism, that everything relative to the poor hog was used in some way or other. 'Nothing is wasted,' he said; 'everything is used save the poor animal's dying squeal, and we would use that too, did not the hog need it to die with.'

The bullock slaughtered in England is not allowed this luxury, nor is it necessary—everything is swift, sudden, and silent. When the carcase is dressed ready for the market, it is suspended from a line of overhead rails, along which it can be run into the cooling chambers. In the summer-time, refrigerating rooms have to be used, and are then in great demand, as will be readily imagined from the magnitude of the work

performed. The lairages have railway connection with all the principal lines in the kingdom; so that the meat passes out of the cooling chamber into the meat van which is drawn up at the door, not to be again handled until its final destination is reached. It says much for the despatch with which the business of this lairage is conducted, when it is stated that, during a busy season, meat has been placed upon the London market within thirty-six hours after the live beasts were landed from the cattle-ship. At the Woodside Lairage there is, as we have said, accommodation for 3500 head of cattle, and during a rush there have even been more than that number patiently awaiting the mandate of the buyers. There is something impressive in the sight of this vast collection of patient ministers to our wants. We have stated above that they are young bullocks in prime condition. Occasionally, however, one sees beasts that bear evidence of having been employed as oxen frequently are in new districts where horses may be scarce. All, however, have attached to their ear a metal tag, which bears an identifying number. This serves a double purpose. In case of disease, it is possible, by referring to the number, to find out the port of shipment and the district from which the diseased animal came. The tag is left attached to the hide when the animal is dead, and all such labelled hides are admitted to the States duty free as home-raised products. The transatlantic trade in wet hides, however, is not so great as it was some years ago.

Although eighteen hundred is the record of beasts slaughtered in a single day at the Woodside Lairage, the usual number falls much short of this. No doubt, the average weekly number of American cattle killed and dressed at the two lairages on Liverpool's vast Dock estate lies between 6500 and 7000, which gives a total of over 300,000 for the year.

Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Salisbury, when he becomes apprised of young Arthur's death, the line, 'The uncleanly savours of a slaughter-house.' However aptly such an adjective as uncleanly might apply to the slaughter-houses of Shakespeare's time, it is by no means applicable to those under discussion. Cleanliness is insisted upon, and secured. Nothing is wasted. Those portions of the beast that usually come under the term offal are all of them carefully marketed. Nothing is lost. To say what becomes of them, however, is a very delicate matter. The fatty products undergo an initial clarification process by being steeped in brine. They are then, after further preparation, used in the manufacture of margarine and kindred apologies for butter. The bulk of the fatty matter so used is exported to the Continent, whence much of it is sent back to England as oleo-margarine. It need not be said that this fatty matter is perfectly clean and wholesome; and if the oleo-margarine of which it forms part is sold as such, and not as butter, there can be no reasonable objection to the commodity as an aid in domestic cookery.

Such are the more salient features of Liverpool's share in the imported live-meat trade, a trade which has developed with phenomenal rapidity. In addition to the enormous number of live cattle imported into the country, there must be considered the dead-meat which is

brought also. It is only by summing the two that we can form any idea of the extent to which we are dependent upon lands outside our own island cluster to supply us with the most elementary necessities of daily life.

MISS HELEN.

By VIVIAN BROOKE.

Rowdy! 'Tis no word for it—too genteel by half. We were as wicked a set, at our diggin's, as New South Wales could show—no slight thing. If the world's kettle had been set on the boil, we'd have come to the top as prime scum—truth, and no lie, mate. But amongst us was a man dubbed 'the Squire,' because, though he fared like the rest of us, toiled, lived, and dressed just as we did, yet there was that in him which stamped him as of quite a different breed. Swells out of luck are to be found by the bushel in Australia; still, I never came upon *his* double before or since. Rumour went that he was a Baronet at home in England, but had been forced to cut and run; so he tried New South Wales and the gold diggin's, bent on succeeding.

I found him at Green Valley Creek when I reached it; we worked not far off each other. I can't say I liked him, though he was wonderfully quiet and civil spoken, but cold as ice, and hard as nails; a chap who was never tired, and who never gave in, but plodded on and on towards his own end, whatever that might be. But silent as he was, and selfish, he opened out a bit to me, pra'aps because, though I didn't set up either for a swell or a saint, I wasn't quite so bad as the worst in Green Valley Creek. I had been respectably brought up, the son of a small farmer in Kent; but I didn't go in for respectability myself; it never agreed with me; so I was sent adrift at last with fifty pounds in my pocket, and the world before me. There was a fresh stampede towards Australia at the time, and I joined the general rush and scramble; and, as I say, when I had settled down at my claim, 'the Squire' and I scraped up a sort of friendship.

He did not live alone; his daughter was with him, though how and when she reached him none knew; she *had* reached him, and bore her strange life as best she might. They dwelt in a small shanty in the midst of many pines, a poor rough place, far apart from the other huts; a queer frame for such a stately picture of a woman—a lady! with the same superior bearing visible in her father. I'd walked that way with 'the Squire' once, and she ran out to meet him. The sight of her struck me all of a heap, so unexpected in the lonely spot, where there was no other company than the bright-winged birds, no other sound than the stir of the windy trees. She was tall, the colour of wild roses in her cheeks, Heaven's blue in her eyes. Her dress, dark and close fitting, had none of the flashy ornaments that women such as *we* take up with cram on; her hair, coiled smooth about her head, shone like black satin.

'This is one of my—chums, my dear,' said 'the Squire' with his soft voice and his hard smile.

Since then, I had hung about the log-house

often, labour ended. I fetched water, got in sticks, cleaned boots, or did such odd jobs which were not fit for her, and said no word; but she found me out in a brace of shakes, and grew used to and was thankful for such help as I could give, knowing that I meant no harm, though I startled her at first—a great Orson of a chap in my rough gear.

One evening I came on her watching in the gloaming. How eerie it was there underneath the trees; the wind soughed through the branches, bringing a dash of rain; a deluge was in the black clouds sweeping across the sky.

'I am anxious about my father,' she said, looking like a tall white lily that somehow had been shoved into the wrong pot, and touching my big earth-stained fingers with her fine slim hand. 'I am always anxious about him; though, since knowing you, I have not felt so absolutely distressed, for I am glad to recollect that you are within his call. You would stand between him and harm, I think.'

'Why, res, miss; make your mind easy on that score; 'twould be done with a will.—But what harm is like to come, that you need flurry?'

'Oh, but, Mr Straightways, it is such a hard, dreadful life for him.'

'And for you, miss?'

'Ah, but I will not think of myself; that would never do,' she answered quickly; and going indoors, she began to tidy the scrap of a room, thus trying to rout her terrors.

'Ned!' she cried, stopping suddenly (her father always called me so). 'I had such a curious dream last night. I dreamed that I went down into the little valley beyond the wood, and there I saw my father lying on the grass sound asleep—so sound that I could not wake him; whilst the clusters of wild-flowers sprang up so high that they hid him, and I heard the pines in the distance chanting a solemn kind of litany. I was crying when I woke.'

'You are too much alone, miss, and grow nervous.'

'Perhaps. And then—I am troubled about his journey to Goulburn to-morrow, and his taking so much value with him.'

Goulburn, as I suppose everybody knows, is the chief place in the southern gold-mining district; we all went there at times to get our gains weighed, or changed, or banked.

'My father has been very fortunate lately, has he not?' she asked.

'He has had some good finds, miss; and to-day he got hold of two jolly big nuggets.'

'I am glad. Will he bring them home this evening?—What's that?' and she sprang to the door, flinging it wide open, the shine of the lamp behind her. 'Dearest father!' she cried, 'is it you?' But she broke off, alarm in her voice: 'Ned! Ned!' for no father was there, but two of the worst of our lot—scamps for whom hemp was growing; the one a blackguard sailor; the other, a smartish, slimy chap, thin, dark, lying. His name was Phil Dawlish.

I remembered now, as I saw him by the flash of the light, that he, as well as I, had been near when 'the Squire' held up the two great nuggets; and it struck me—I'm quick at conclusions—that both scoundrels had not intended to come

up to the house, but were just lurking round—What for?

Miss Helen—I only knew her by her Christian name then—faced them steadily, though she had called me to her, and asked what they wanted.

'Why, nothin' in special, miss,' stammered Dawlish, lifting his ragged straw hat with swell-mob politeness, and a leer which made me tingle to kick him; 'on'y, is the old Boss at home?' I—I mean your Pa, miss,' he translated.

'No,' she replied, holding her head high, to show she was not frightened; but I, being close to her, could hear her heart thudding like a hammer, whilst the blood flamed to her brows under the foul gaze roving over her. 'Why do you ask?'

'Just this, mum. Will you be so good as tell him that me and my pal's off to Hulton's Ranch for a short spell, and if he'd like to tramp over—why, 'tis a mighty 'andsome part o' the country, and he'd be welcome, that's all.'

'You must be in a hurry to go,' I said, putting in my oar, 'if you're trudging twenty mile for pleasure such a night as this.'

'Oh, we didn't know as *you* wos in charge here,' with a brutish laugh; 'but the walk is our lookout; the lady can deliver a civil message, I hope!'

'I will give it,' interposed Miss Helen, 'as soon as my father comes in.'

'Much obleeged, miss; then theer's nothin' more to add; so we'll toddle.—Good-night, miss,' and he flourished his hat again.

She shut the door upon them, drawing a stout bar across it. 'Are those the men *he* works with?' she cried, flinging up her hands—'Heaven help us!'

I tried to turn the subject, stirring the fire into a blaze, and pretending to do a lot of things, for I didn't care to leave her. 'Twas my belief the two blackguards were still hanging about. As for their invitation to 'the Squire,' it was but a lie invented on the moment.

I was casting round for another job, when she stayed me by asking if I would go to meet her father.

'But you?—'

'Nay; I do not mind. The little house is secure. Why,' with a wistful smile, 'I am always alone from daybreak until dark.'

I knew it was the fact; so, bidding her open to none until she heard me or 'the Squire' whistle, I started on my errand.

Not very far had I to go, for I met him in that same little ravine of which his daughter had dreamed; it skirted the pine-wood. His pick was over his shoulder, his right hand in his pocket—feeling the nuggets, perhaps. He was singing a song in some foreign lingo, Italian or Spanish. He looked more content than I had seen him—more at rest, nodding to me in his patronising fashion. After a few stray words, I related what had happened, advising him to be on his guard.

'Thanks, I will,' he replied, haughtily amused at the scamps asking *him* to pay a visit in their company. 'But I've a secret to tell you, Ned,' he added. 'I have done with Green Valley Creek, and shaken off its crew. Luck has favoured me beyond my hopes; I can afford to turn my back upon it. I shall take my daughter

—she does not know it yet—with me to Goulburn to-morrow, where we shall remain for a short time, then go on to Melbourne; I have thoughts of settling there.'

As he spoke, the little tie of comradeship between us shattered: in a moment we were sundered as the Poles, so quietly he brushed it away.

'If you like to step round early in the morning and see us off, you can.—Why, my good fellow, you look quite down. Well, it is kind to be sorry to lose me. We shall meet the wagons at the end of the wood. If those scoundrels intend to dog my steps—I agree with you their trip to Hulton's is only a ruse—I should find your company useful; also, you could help to carry our few belongings. I paid up my rent to Johnson at the tavern last night; perhaps you'd kindly give him the shanty key?—Why, Straightways,' with laughing surprise, 'has my news struck you dumb?'

I felt as if it had, as if I were shot through and through; the earth swayed under my feet. He was condescendingly gratified at my troubled state, taking it all to himself; he was just the man to do it.

'You were always an honest fellow, Ned!—a trusty creature! Be sure that you come to-morrow; my daughter will like to shake hands with you before she leaves;' and he went on gaily through the rich, thick grass.

No rest was mine that night; evil was in the air. So, as I could not sleep, I got up and went out. Not being a fool—I knew I must keep my misery to myself; but my life was empty! empty! It held a vacant place that could never be filled—never again! never again! You see, I was hard hit, mate, like the donkeys. I stamped and stormed at myself for a mooning idiot. What was Miss Helen to me? What could she ever have been to me?—a lumbering, vagabond chap, not worthy to kiss the dust she trod on.

But I must go back and watch the house that covered her for this last night, so I returned to the ravine. In it were many little dells swarming with the wild-flowers of the grand Australian spring. Now, in one of these same dells what do you think I saw?—a dead man's face. Yes, I knew at once that he was dead; but so easily 'the Squire' rested on the wet moss, that the song I had heard him singing might still have been upon his lips. Raising his head, I found a blow aimed from behind had killed him. He had dropped and died at once. His pockets, turned lining outward, were empty. Snatching up his fallen pick, I tore on to the log-house, knowing well whom I should find there—my long sharp knife was in my belt. I raced round to the back: the little kitchen door was undone; the fiends in possession had small fear of interruption. They were in 'the Squire's' bedroom, making free with some whisky which he had kept in a cupboard. Gold was there also, as I knew. By their shouts, I fancied they had come upon it. But I let them be. Where was Miss Helen?

I found her in the sitting-room, tied in her chair, her lips bleeding over her white teeth; the cursed hounds had struck her. 'There are three of them,' she whispered; 'those two who came, and another man. They watched for my father,

and murdered him—they told me so.—Hark! they are coming. Ned, they have pistols, and will shoot you where you stand. Go away this instant—only—kill me first;’ and she lifted her white pillar of a throat.

‘Now, my beauty,’ roared a drunken voice through the thin partition, ‘we’re bringin’ you a cup o’ whisky to drink our ealths in. Ain’t you longin’ for us to make love to ye? We’ll stow away the rhino first, and then—you shall have your turn.’

‘Be quiet,’ I whispered back to her, hacking at the cords with my knife; and in a few seconds I had her out of the chair, and we dashed out of the house together. Seizing her hand to prevent her from falling, I guided her as fast as possible from the crew who were now following after us with curses and howls. Fortunately the demons were too drunk to run very fast. A couple of bullets whizzed by us, striking the tree-stems instead of our heads. In our desperate haste, we stumbled and fell more than once over spreading roots, but were up again in a moment.

On and on and on until the last tree was at our backs. Then we made for a lane which led to Johnson’s tavern, leaving the yells faint in the distance; there we stopped, and there she told her tale.

News spreads quickly at the diggin’s, and Judge Lynch is for immediate action. Before noon, the stolen gold—including the two big nuggets—had been recovered, and a couple of figures dangled from an oak by the wayside; whilst the third villain, not guilty of bloodshed, shed plenty of his own beneath avenging blows. We had a habit of settling matters speedily at Green Valley Creek.

As soon as it was possible, Miss Helen started for Melbourne, whence she was to set sail for England, where she would join her mother’s relatives—very heavy swells indeed, I believe. And I followed her in secret every inch of the way, though she knew it not until I stood by her on the deck of the steamer, after I had helped to stow her boxes safely in the hold. Then I blurted out that I hoped she ‘would not be offended at my coming, but’—And then I shut up.

‘Ned!’ she cried, ‘brave Ned! dear, kind, good Ned! There are debts which can never be repaid, and I am your debtor always—always, Ned!’ and holding out her hands to me, she bowed her lovely head upon my big brown fists and sobbed.

‘Don’t you be a confounded noodle at the last, Straightways,’ I said to myself of myself; ‘you’ve pulled the reins in fairly well up to the present; pull tight, my man, pull tight;’ and I did.

‘You are very welcome, Miss Helen’—I spoke with a quiet voice. ‘I wish—I wish—I could have been a gentleman for just a little while, so that I might have served you better.’

‘A gentleman!’ she cried, lifting her face, and looking full at me, and then she raised these hard fists of mine to her soft lips and kissed them. Yes, she kissed them—and I!—how was I to help it?—the touch of those soft lips broke me down smash. Away went all my self-control, as if the winds had blown it, and up from my heart, like a pent stream bursting its bounds, rushed the strong surge of love and adoration,

which—having broken loose at last—wouldn’t be driven back. I can’t remember clearly what I said, though I’ve tried—often; the whirl and tempest within me were too much. I didn’t plead with her; no, no—I knew better than that, even then in the midst o’ my madness. I didn’t dare even to touch her with one of my rough fingers, but I think I made her understand somehow that my heart and my life had gone out to her for evermore. Then I stopped, sudden, my chest heaving, my voice choking, my sight blinded by a mist that didn’t come from the sea. I stopped because of the great start of surprise that shook her from head to heel, and because of the red colour flooding up to the roots of her hair. Yet she was not angry—nor offended. She put out her little hands to me again, meaning—I knew it—both to silence and to comfort me. She did not speak—for what could she have said?—what could any stately lady such as she have said?—besides, the steamer’s engines were puffing, and time was up. She laid her head down on my arm a moment, and then left me with a rain of pitying tears.

When the vessel had passed completely out of sight, and its long smoke-line had died out from the sky, I hurried back to Green Valley Creek, and took up my work again—hard work is the best friend life has for us, sometimes.

But I have never forgotten Miss Helen—I never shall forget her; and I’ve trdged to the old spot often and stood before the empty house. And when the sun flamed down behind the pines, and the shadows crept longer and longer across the grass, I’ve had a fancy that I still could see her at the open door—watching for her father.

That’s my story, old chappie; we’ve each our own, of one sort or another.—Fill up your glass, and let’s have a pipe.

THE LITTLE FEET.

A MOTHER’S VILLANELLE.

Across the lonely chamber floor,
And down the passage, through the hall,
The little feet resound no more!

There cometh through the open door
No merry voice, no laughing call
Across the lonely chamber floor;

But where the sunlight flashes o’er
Gray tapestry and pictured wall,
The little feet resound no more!

Perchance upon a distant shore
They wander now—no more to fall
Across the lonely chamber floor.

Why comes the summer to restore
Bright hollyhocks and lilies tall?—
The little feet resound no more!

Alas for Hope’s deceptive lore!
Her words are desolation all;
Across the lonely chamber floor
The little feet resound no more!

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

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WHY BANKS FAIL.

THE recent series of banking failures in Australia is beyond doubt one of the most grievous financial calamities on record, and a severe blow to the prospects of the great colonies affected by it. In the course of a few months we have seen more than a dozen banks—amongst them some of the leading financial institutions in Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland—obliged to suspend payments; banks possessing an aggregate of over eight million pounds of paid-up capital, and owing to the public in the colonies and at home about seventy million pounds in deposits. This is a disaster as to the magnitude of which there can be no question, and the widespread consequences of which must be felt for a long time to come. We may hope, however, that in the end the losses involved may be much less than would appear to be threatened by the wholesale nature of the breakdown. If time be granted, reconstruction or, if necessary, liquidation may prove that many if not most of these banks have twenty shillings in the pound, and something over, for all their liabilities; but this is for the future to show. In the meantime it would be a pity if the calamity were taken to be a mysterious dispensation, instead of an object-lesson as easily grasped as it is instructive.

Of all great trades, banking is one of the simplest in the principles that regulate it. The intricacy and multiplicity of detail involved in the administration of a large bank in modern times does not at all affect the great rules which, if kept in mind, will ensure safety. Prudence and common-sense, as well as shrewdness, judgment, and decision, may be said to sum up the whole mystery of bank-management; a high degree of skill is not always demanded, whilst a bold and enterprising spirit may be out of place. Yet our own time has furnished many instances in which the most ordinary precautions have been neglected, and well-understood conditions of security have been ignored, with the most ruinous results. No species of commercial failure may be avoided

with more certainty; nor is there any that is fraught with more serious trouble to the community at large. This is a good reason for studying the lessons of such events, and reiterating the plain principles which should suffice to obviate them.

The development of the crisis in Australia has been accompanied by a panic of the worst kind, carried to a degree of madness unusual even at such periods, and the whole brunt of it has fallen upon the banks. It may therefore appear sufficient to some to affirm that these wholesale suspensions are in no way due to the wise or unwise policy followed, inasmuch as no bank could stand under such a violent and unforeseen attack. Although there is not only plausibility but a certain amount of truth in this plea, it is by no means the whole truth. For we have to inquire, first of all, how the crisis originated, and whether the banks themselves have had any share in bringing it about. In our own country we have only too good reason to understand what may be called the natural history of a commercial crisis. During the last seventy years, financial convulsions have recurred with great frequency, and the course of events has on each occasion been almost invariably the same. There comes, first of all, a period of unwonted prosperity, during which prices rise, trade expands, savings accumulate, and the supply of floating capital available for investment is more than usually plentiful. The cheapness or the abundance of money seeking fresh outlets paves the way to new enterprises and projects. An investing or speculative mania ensues, by which the abundant supply of available capital is speedily exhausted and turned into a scarcity. When this point is reached, reaction is at hand; prices fall, credit collapses, and all that has been unsound and factitious in the previous inflation is disclosed. Before this process has gone very far, it becomes intensified by alarm or panic, assuming the shape of an overwhelming demand for actual cash, the possession of which is rendered an imperative necessity, both for merchants who have obliga-

tions constantly falling due, and for bankers who owe to their depositors large sums that are liable to be asked for, in coin or some form of legal tender, at any moment. This is the final stage of the crisis, attended by the bankruptcy and ruin of those who have not in due time made ample provision against its dangers.

Commercial crises may sometimes pass without any considerable banking failures; but whenever they arrive, it may be taken for granted that many banks suffer severely, and that not a few of them have contributed to the inflation of business by the undue facilities which they have afforded in the time of excitement. Banks can do much both to check and to foster the mania. By refusing to extend credit unduly, or to advance on shares of speculative concerns, they can effectually discourage over-trading and gambling; on the other hand, should they catch the fever themselves, they may enlarge the mischief indefinitely. In countries like our own, where the credit system is highly developed, banks are the reservoirs in which the floating capital of the country is stored, and it is from them the supply must be drawn for any great extension of trade, whether legitimate or otherwise.

One risk which besets all trades is peculiarly dangerous to banking—the risk arising from eager competition. A community may have too many banks, for a number in excess of real wants must lead to the too ready acceptance of questionable business. It is not only possible for banks to foster over-trading in others; sometimes they themselves sail much too near the wind, and crowd on every inch of canvas. In the stress of competition, moreover, it is too frequently forgotten that the banks have common interests, which can only be properly safeguarded by mutual agreement and combination. Australia is decidedly over-banked. Not only is the number of banks excessive, but the deposits entrusted to their keeping at high rates of interest appear to be larger than can as yet be profitably employed in the development of legitimate enterprise. 'Raw haste, half-sister to delay,' has been the characteristic of trade in the Australasian colonies for some years past, and we fear it is not too much to say that it has appeared also in the financial policy of the colonial Governments. The latter have not entirely escaped the discredit involved in recent events. During the last ten years, particularly in the amount of their borrowings for public works and other objects, they have outrun even the rapid growth of colonial resources, and thereby inflicted damage, which it may be confidently hoped is merely temporary, upon their own credit.

The special feature of the Australian trouble has yet to be mentioned. The speculative mania, the collapse of which we are now witnessing, spent its chief energy upon landed property. It was a 'land-boom'; real estate in its various forms was the security upon which the funds of the banks were largely advanced, and it is that in which they are now locked up. This, of course, is against all the recognised rules of sound banking. It may be considered an accepted axiom that real estate is not a proper 'banking

security,' because not readily convertible into cash, and that no bank can safely advance upon it except to a most limited and carefully guarded extent. The National Banks in the United States, for example, are actually forbidden by law to lend on real property, the only case in which they are permitted to deal with it being where they receive it as collateral security for the repayment of a bad or doubtful debt. All these considerations were probably familiar enough to the directors of the colonial banks, but it has long been their practice to advance on mortgages of all descriptions. They held great masses of deposits at interest, and if they were to earn a dividend, had to find profitable employment for the superabundant means which were constantly reaching their hands—a task the difficulty of which was much aggravated in recent years by the depression which narrowed the field of legitimate banking business. The obvious remedy was, instead of extending their sphere of operations, to reduce their rates of interest on deposits to such a point as would attract no more than could be profitably and legitimately used, and also to provide against the deposits held on 'demand' or at short dates an ample provision of ready cash and securities of the most 'liquid' description.

There is another cause of peril to the solvency of banks which has played a fatal part in most of the great bank failures that have taken place in our own country within living memory—namely, the absorption of an undue proportion of a bank's resources by a few overgrown accounts. The temptation of large accounts, easy to manipulate, but disproportioned to the means of the bank, has over and over again been the immediate cause of insolvency, and in too many instances has led to the falsification of balance sheets and to other forms of fraud. We have had painful occasion recently, in the deplorable case of the Liberator Building Society, to observe that it is not only banks that are liable to fall into this dangerous snare. The story of the collapse of the Western Bank of Scotland in 1857 is a typical example; four great firms alone, at the time of their insolvency, owing the bank nearly two million pounds, although the whole capital of the latter was only a million and a half. In the case of the Northumberland and Durham District Bank, which also failed in 1857, and which had a capital of about six hundred thousand pounds, there was one company amongst its debtors, the Derwent Iron Company, which owed the bank £947,000—a circumstance which found a somewhat sinister explanation in the fact that the managing director, who was the moving spirit of the whole bank, was also largely interested in the Derwent Iron Company. It was the same kind of error, aggravated by fraudulent and criminal dealing, that appeared in the ruinous breakdown of the City of Glasgow Bank in 1878. So well understood has this risk of bank administration become, that in the United States it is guarded against by a statute which prohibits a bank from lending to any one individual, corporation, or firm an amount exceeding a tenth of the bank's paid-up capital. Whether the affairs of any of the Australian banks have been complicated by mismanagement of this kind has not yet been shown, but it will be a matter both for surprise

and congratulation if they have entirely escaped it.

In one respect the calamity which has just befallen the colonial banks is a striking and most necessary lesson to bankers everywhere, for it puts in a very clear light the obvious principle that where great deposit liabilities exist, the first condition of safety is the provision of a proportionate cash reserve, usually estimated at one-third of the liabilities. To avoid the expense of such a reserve, and to employ resources closely, will no doubt swell the dividends of a bank; but at the same time such a policy endangers the stability of the entire fabric. And this is especially a word of caution to British bankers, for the disproportion between their deposit liabilities and their cash reserve is enormous, and has vastly increased during the last quarter of a century. In banking administration, the first and last consideration should be *safety*. 'Slow and sure' may be a disagreeable motto in our impatient haste to be rich; but it is the only trustworthy counsel in building up a great banking business that is meant to be solid and lasting.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.—'THE PLAY'S THE THING!'

ISABEL speedily provided herself with a constant chaperon, by having one of her Aged to stay with her week by week. But the Aged did not give her so much countenance as her father's presence had given her to invite Ainsworth to tête-à-tête visits. Yet, as it happened, that mattered little; for Ainsworth was sitting very close to his desk to manufacture his play—his stake for success—and was little inclined to tear himself from it even to see and to speak to her who was the remote hope of his heart.

Ainsworth had been for months hard at work on the play. Soon after the departure of 'the chief,' Alexander joined him as an active co-adjutor, while he lodged in the same house, in the second-floor back. He did not help to construct the drama or to write it, but he listened with flattering attention to the reading of scenes, and went forth into the byways of journalism and talked about them; and his acquaintance was, like Sam Weller's knowledge of London, 'extensive and peculiar.' There was not a newspaper office, big or little, between Charing Cross and Ludgate Hill but he was on some kind of speaking terms with; he knew the men who wrote the paragraphs everywhere about everything; and he exchanged salutations with the frequenters of all the bars of the Strand and Fleet Street. So it came about that such greetings and expositions as these often passed when he showed himself in one of his favourite haunts.

'Well, Alexander, how goes the play?'

'The play! What play?' said Alexander, affecting absence of mind.

'Your friend Ainsworth's play! the masterpiece!'

'The play of Mr Ainsworth,' said Alexander portentously, 'is not to be lightly spoken of. It goes exceedingly well; and it will take the wind

out of the sails of one or two writers who believe themselves dramatists. The Great Panjandrum is, I believe, smelling after it; but he buys a play only to put it in a chest to grow mouldy and out of date. Mr Ainsworth and I understand business better than have dealings with the Panjandrum.'

It was not unlikely that Alexander himself was responsible for one or two of the paragraphs which appeared, for Ainsworth had turned him on to assist him in 'doing' the theatres, and had found that, with a little editing, his stuff passed as tolerable work-a-day journalism; and at the same time he had found him occupation as a purveyor of gossip on one or two journals—notably on that Lancashire journal whose staff he had once himself adorned. Certain (not all) of the paragraphs caught Ainsworth's eye, and he was very wroth.

'This must be from your gossip, Alexander!' he said. 'And I wanted the whole thing kept secret.'

'But, Ainsworth,' said Alexander, 'the way to get your play forward is, first, to get it talked about. I flatter myself I have worked that very well. I am proud of the result.'

'I am not!' said Ainsworth. 'It may seem ungrateful in me, Alexander; but I am not. And I beg of you that you will henceforward say nothing at all about it; or, if you must say something, since you have begun, say something that will put people off the scent. Understand, please, my dear fellow, that I want the time and the place of its production—if it ever is produced—and its author's name kept secret. Don't be offended with me; but I have my good reasons.'

'My dear Ainsworth,' said Alexander, 'I know them. You have not, if I may say so, hid your flame under a bushel!' And he shook with laughter at his joke.

'What do you mean?' said Ainsworth, scarce knowing whether to be angry or ashamed.

'My dear Ainsworth,' said Alexander, 'you know what I mean very well. I do not wonder at it. I only wonder that, after seeing her and knowing her, any man could take the smallest degree of interest in another woman. . . . What says Tennyson? "A daughter of the gods! divinely tall, and most divinely fair!" Even the miserable individual before you is subject to her fascination.—But do not be alarmed, my dear Ainsworth. I have no pretension to have engaged anything but her most friendly regard. I pay my homage from afar off, and beat upon my breast. I am not worthy of her; indeed, I am by no means certain that you are—or that any man is.'

'I thank you for that last clause, Alexander,' said Ainsworth: 'it soothes my vanity.'

'And let me take the liberty of telling you, Ainsworth,' said Alexander, brimming over with his subject, 'that you have an immense amount of absurd vanity.—I venture to think,' he continued, with heavy emphasis, 'that I know a good deal of women; and I mean and I say that you do not understand Miss Raynor. You are vain enough to wish to get to her level of wealth by your play; and you do not understand that she is the kind of woman that thinks nothing of fortune!—you do not understand it, Ains-

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worth!—that if she were fond of a man she would follow him to the end of the world, though he had not a penny to bless himself with, and she would pour out all she had upon him with generous profusion.'

'I do not understand that?' exclaimed Ainsworth. 'I understand that only too well! That is why I stick to my play and hold my tongue; because I would not take advantage of her generosity. I will not be thought by any one to be a fortune-hunter. I shall go through with the play.'

'Very well,' said Alexander. 'I knew you were an obstinate mule. Lancastrian and Scotch make a bad cross,' said he meditatively.

There was one man of consequence who was moved by the paragraphs as to the new play. The manager of the Variety Theatre—himself an actor—was in desperate plight. For some time he had touched nothing that had paid him; he had lost faith in the established playwrights, and publicly sneered at them, and he had a great mind to try a bold—it seemed to his theatrical acquaintance a reckless—experiment: to produce a new play by a new writer! He had heard of this young man, Ainsworth, and he knew he was generally thought well of as a dramatic critic; he was aware—he had frequently proved it by example—that it was seldom a critic of the drama could write a play, but yet it was not conclusively proved that a critic could not; so one day he sat down in his room at the theatre and scribbled a note to Ainsworth:

'DEAR SIR—I have seen it mentioned that you are writing a play. You are acquainted with the requirements of this theatre. If you think your play is at all likely to suit my requirements, send it to me (type-written) when it is finished and I will read it.'

'Hooray!' cried Ainsworth when he read the note. 'Of course he promises nothing, and I know the chief requirement of his theatre is that a play should contain a part for him.—I think mine contains that, Alexander; and after all, it is an immense deal to get a spontaneous offer even to read it!'

'And yet,' said Alexander triumphantly, 'you entertained the opinion that my gossip was nothing but pernicious!'

CHAPTER XXIX.—RUMOURS OF EVIL.

It happened that on a certain evening at this time—while the two aspirants to her hand were both striving their utmost, in their own way and without her knowledge, to win her worthily—it happened that Isabel was invited to a political dinner at her uncle's. The dinner was going to be, her aunt told her, a very important affair—something in which the fate of parties or of ministries was involved; for the Suffields were now very important people. They were going on from strength to strength in the way determined by Mrs Suffield.

The dinner-party was large, so that the conversation between any pair was little likely to be attended to and taken up by the whole table; there was something of the privacy of a crowd about it. Lord Clitheroe had taken Isabel down to dinner, and presently—they had a frank and

friendly regard for each other—he began to speak of a matter that arrested her attention.

'It is lucky,' said he, 'that I was asked to take you down, Miss Raynor, for I wanted very much to talk to you; and it will be so much easier to talk now than afterwards, when people are dodging about, and in and out of the drawing-rooms. Don't, please, look startled or indignant with anything I may say: we don't want to attract notice or inquiry.'

'It should be something very interesting and piquant that you have to say,' observed Isabel, 'judging from your introduction.'

'It is more than interesting,' said he seriously: 'it is of the greatest consequence. Do you ever, may I ask, hear from your cousin George?'

'No,' answered Isabel with a blush, 'I don't.'

'Well,' continued Clitheroe, 'I have learned, quite in a private way, that he is concerned in very risky cotton speculations.'

'I know nothing about such things, of course,' said Isabel; 'but do you think that is likely to be true?'

'I know it is true,' answered he. 'The fact is, between ourselves, I have seen evidence of it with my own eyes. You know—or you may not know—that I am partner in the Lancashire bank which takes charge of the Suffield money, and I have seen large cheques and acceptances which leave no doubt that he is engaged in risky cotton speculation with one or two very doubtful foreigners. You will understand I am telling you this quite in confidence. Perhaps all the danger of it does not strike you; but he has no business to be engaged in speculation at all, and that particular kind of speculation is likely to be most ruinous, especially to a man who cannot give all his attention to it. It is even possible—if he goes on—that he may in a short time ruin his proper business and ruin his father along with it.'

Isabel looked at him shrewdly, and he blushed under her look.

'Do not, please, misunderstand me,' said he. 'I am not anxious on my own account. I would marry Phemy whatever happened—though I have no doubt I would have trouble with my people. I am anxious on George's account, whom I like—he is a very good fellow, though a little too strongly convinced of the accuracy of his own judgment—and on Mr Suffield's account, who is the best man in the world. I would speak to George myself about it, except that I am afraid of being misunderstood; and of course it would not be fair to speak to Mr Suffield. That's why I have spoken in confidence to you.'

'You think I should speak to him, or write to him about it?'

'I know,' said Clitheroe, 'he thinks more of your opinion than of that of any one else in the world.'

Isabel did not answer. She went home very soon, and entered her drawing-room.

'Don't go to bed just yet,' she said to the maid who had admitted her and who turned up the light; 'I should like you to run to the pillar-post with a letter in a few minutes. You won't mind, will you?'

She sat down at once to her writing-table to compose a letter to George. She found it a more difficult task than she had anticipated: to avoid appearing too warmly interested in him, and yet

be cousinly, affectionate, and frank; to express the fear that he was embarked in dangerous speculations, and yet not stir in him resentment and suspicion. She accomplished it, however, with tolerable satisfaction, and sent it to the post by her maid. But still she sat at her writing-table—sat with her chin in her hand, and the lace of her sleeve falling away, like foam of the sea, from her white, rounded arm. She was thinking closely, thinking of that matter which had occupied her ever since Lord Clitheroe had said that George's present course might end in her uncle's ruin. It had come on her at once like an inspiration—with the joy as well as the suddenness of an inspiration—that if that should happen, there was one clear thing for her to do. She would transfer to them the fortune which Uncle Harry had left her, and she herself would turn to again and earn a living for herself and her father; her Aged need not suffer, for there were many friends ready to help her to maintain them as they were. What should she do?—return to school-teaching? She was not fond of teaching. Alan Ainsworth had once told her she ought to be a novelist. Who knew? Perhaps she might become a novelist, or, at any rate, a writer of some sort. From that she fell to thinking of Ainsworth, and then of George; and so she went to bed.

Next day there came in a singular fashion a suggestive indication that Lord Clitheroe's suspicions of George's speculation were not astray, and that even George's father was somewhat troubled in his mind concerning his son.

A question had arisen respecting our administration of a certain part of India; and there was expected a debate in the House of Commons on Indian affairs. Suffield was to have spoken, but at the last moment failed to rise, and his friends were disposed to chaff him for his backwardness.

'To tell you the absolute truth, my lad,' said Suffield to Lord Clitheroe, as they walked out to their carriage, he leaning on Clitheroe's arm, while Isabel walked immediately in front of them, and so overheard his words: 'I went into the smoking-room for a whiff, and there was a man—one of the Liverpool members—saying that there are still strong suspicions down there that some person is trying on a "corner" in cotton, a foreign creature called Gorgonio—do you know him?'

'I? No!' answered Clitheroe.

'I thought you gave a start when I named him. George knows him, though—we met him in the summer in Douglas—and I wondered, if there is a "corner" likely to be on and he knows of it, why he hasn't told me. And if he doesn't know, he ought to know, to lay in enough cotton in time; for about th' end of th' last "corner" prices went up, so that I couldn't afford to buy, and had to put the mills on half-time.'

'Why don't you write to George about it, Mr Suffield?' asked Clitheroe.

'Well, I did write to him a month or so ago, when that article of M'Fie's appeared. And his answer was pretty much "Stuff and nonsense!" I don't like to write again in a worrying way; because, you see, he's young, and if you want a young horse to go well, you mustn't *tear* at the reins. But that bothered me, and I couldn't think of my speech. It was like a bit of grit got

into the delicate machinery of my brain, and it wouldn't let my speech unwind. I think I'll go down and see George: that'll be best.'

To Isabel, who was present, that seemed evidence of far stronger quality than it really was that the ruin of her uncle was imminent. 'Poor uncle!' she said to herself. 'To lose all that himself and aunt worked so hard and for so many years to get together! Dear, dear uncle! Oh, how glad I am!—how I thank God!—that I am able to do something for you!'

She wrought upon herself such a vivid impression that the voluntary surrender of her wealth was near and actual, that, when she reached home, she sat down by her drawing-room fire and considered the details: her father must be removed from his present retreat—her heart sank a little—and she must give up her pleasant home. In short, as the details rose before her, the surrender, though sweet and ungrudged, was painful. Was that strange? She was a good, generous girl, but she was quite human; and she had enjoyed the advantages of wealth for so short a time, that its novelty and attractiveness had not worn off. It is easy to commend the simple joys of hard work and contented poverty; and the wealthy man or woman who has worn himself or herself out with the cares of this world and wearied his or her appetites with their indulgence, may think with longing of rest from care in a little cosy parlour with a supper of bread and cheese. It is even easy to endure poverty with cheerfulness when you have never known aught else. But when you have known hard, thankless work, and eaten of poverty till its grit has set your teeth on edge, and then have passed away from them both—why, then it is a very painful prospect to surrender leisure and wealth when you have but tasted how sweet they are—how 'good for food,' how 'pleasant to the eyes,' and how much 'to be desired to make one wise.'

She looked round the room in which she sat. She liked it: it was comfortable, luxurious, and rich; it pleased her eye and her artistic taste, and it satisfied her fancy. She had got it all together herself; there was not a thing around her that she had not taken pains to choose, to discover, and to acquire. Everything—even the cushion against which her back rested—had a little history of its own. Must she give all these little things up, which had become like outlying fringes, tassels, and ornaments of her life? And these curious ornaments of rare Indian and Chinese workmanship in gold and gems which belonged to Uncle Harry, and which now adorned her neck and arms—must they be surrendered?

Was it strange that the expectation of losing all these things should cause her a pang? Was it not, indeed, right that it should, and yet that she should not hesitate, even in thought, in her intention of surrendering them? She said to herself steadily, 'They must go!' not once did she murmur, 'Can I not keep them?' The passion of sacrifice was upon her, and its pain only made it the more worthy and pleasing. At the same time its pleasure was enhanced by the thought that if she were once stripped of her wealth, Alan Ainsworth would cease to hold aloof from her, as he had persistently done of late—he had even excused himself from attending her uncle's House of Commons function, though she

had herself asked him—and might come to her with the magic glow of love on his cheek, take her hand and say, 'I need you now!'

She went and sat down at her writing-table, and moved by this ferment of thought and feeling, took from a drawer that journal of her uncle's which was his last bequest, and in which she frequently read. She opened the book at random now and prepared to read. But she paused, with her finger in the place, and thought how strange are the turns of circumstance, how unaccountable that element of surprise in life which men call 'The Irony of Fate!' Why, for instance, should it have so fallen out, first, that Uncle Harry's wealth should have come to her, and then that she should have to give it up after a few months' possession?

Thinking thus, she happened to fling the board of the book back to open it again. The board thus flung aside showed something she had never noticed before: that upon its inner side was a flap or pocket. She thrust in thumb and finger, and, to her surprise, drew out a sheet of note-paper—a few sentences of a letter which Uncle Harry had begun and addressed to herself. She read all the sentences again and again, but these stuck to her memory: 'It would please me much, if you can see your way, that you should marry George, as he and his father desire. He is a worthy young man, but obstinate and over-confident, and there is no woman can help him and guide him better than you.'

Coming at that juncture, the words struck Isabel strangely and solemnly—almost like a message from the tomb.

OCEAN CURRENTS.

OCEAN Currents exercise a very important influence not only on climate but also on commerce. The seas join the nations they divide, and the sailing-ship navigator's principal aim when remote from the land is to proceed along that much-desired track where a fair wind and a favourable current will probably be experienced. Ancient mariners who shuddered at the stormy sea were in blissful ignorance of the continual interchange that is imperceptibly yet surely taking place between the ice-bearing waters of the inhospitable regions adjacent to either Pole and the warmer waters which sparkle beneath the life-giving rays of a vertical sun. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the compass needle was uncertain and the chronometer unknown, hardy pioneers, on an unknown sea stretching westward for many a weary league, were not slow to perceive the insidious circulation of those currents of old ocean which traverse the North Atlantic like rivers of varying breadth, depth, length, and velocity. Columbus described the equatorial drift from east to west, and hazarded a crude conjecture as to its origin. A light wrought-iron utensil had been discovered among the natives of Guadeloupe, and he inferred that perchance this ocean waif might be of European fashioning, and obtained from some abandoned ship which the westerly motion of the tropical sea-surface had brought in all her loneliness from the far-distant shores of the Iberian Peninsula. Washington Irving has appositely remarked that if Columbus had but

steered to the westward, his tiny caravel would have entered the relatively warm water of that storm-breeder the Gulf Stream, and thus have been gradually drifted to Florida, or even to the northward thereof. A Spanish Roman Catholic population, instead of a later arriving English Protestant one, would in that event have made a home in North America.

Since then, seeds from the West Indies, and portions of vessels wrecked on the west coast of Africa, are asserted to have found a final resting-place on the Norwegian coast after a devious drift around the North Atlantic. The United States Hydrographer, Commander Richardson Clover, United States Navy, recently received information from several sources that a floating island had been sighted at sea; and the track of this nautical novelty was clearly indicated on the North Atlantic Pilot Chart for last November. The British steamship *Blue Jacket*, Captain Freeman, on the 28th of July last year, when in 39° 42' N., 64° 20' W., passed a floating forest covering more than a quarter of an acre. This moving mass was visible for a distance of seven miles, and its topmost branches were not less than thirty feet above sea-level. It was sighted also from the Italian steamer *Letimbro* on the 8th of August, in 39° 26' N., 65° 0' W.; and again by Captain Burgess of the British steamship *Roman Prince*, on the 26th of August, in 41° 49' N., 57° 39' W.; and lastly, by Captain Morgan of the British steamer *Ebro*, in 45° 29' N., 42° 39' W.

Water covers about three-fourths of the earth's surface to an average depth of two or three miles, although only a comparatively insignificant fraction of this distance from the sea's surface to the bottom is affected by currents, which are almost solely due to the prevailing winds driving the uppermost layers of liquid before them. Nevertheless, the effects of evaporation, the difference of temperature and specific gravity, and our planet's rotation on its axis, must not be altogether ignored even though their influence be most minute. The wilful wind does not pass without friction over the water on which it rests, but impinges on the surface of the watery waste, and drives it onward as a drift-current. When land, or occasionally another current, is approached, the slowly moving surface-water is deflected along a line of least resistance, and a stream-current is brought into existence. Hence it follows that the configuration of a coast not infrequently determines the direction in which a stream-current shall proceed.

The movements of the sea's surface and the superincumbent air resemble each other in many particulars. Both are fluids subject to the action of gravity; both expand with heat and contract with cold. The warmer air and warmer water follow similar indirect courses from the equatorial regions towards the Poles, while at the same time cooler air and cooler water are proceeding from the polar regions in the direction of the equator. Neither the air nor the water, however, flows due north or due south; as the equatorial-seeking streams lag behind and deviate to the westward, while streams proceeding polewards increase their velocity and deviate to the eastward. The effect of the earth's deflecting force is made manifest in several other ways.

In the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans, in

the torrid zones, a continuous movement of the surface-water takes place from east to west. The South Atlantic equatorial current divides into two at Cape St Roque, the north-east corner of Brazil, flows northwards, meets the waters impelled by the north-east trade-wind to the westward, enters the Caribbean Sea, passes round the Gulf of Mexico, and, as the Gulf Stream, follows the trend of the east coast of North America as far as Newfoundland, whence it travels right across the North Atlantic in an easterly direction. The Gulf Stream, however, does not wash the American coast. A cold current comes creeping southward from Baffin Bay, and hugs the land closely even as far south as the orange groves of Florida. Some deny that the Gulf Stream actually extends from the New World to the Old; but their contention seems merely a matter of nomenclature, and it is perhaps preferable to abide by the time-tried theory until more definite information comes to the front. As the Gulf Stream nears Europe, it widens and becomes fan-shaped. The upper edge tends towards Norway; the central portion moves onward to the English Channel and the Bay of Biscay; while the southern edge flows, partly along the coasts of Portugal and Africa even to the equator, partly to the south-westward, past the Canary Islands and the Cape Verdes, reaching in course of time that portion of the equatorial drift due to the north-east trade-wind, and thus completing the circuit of the North Atlantic in a direction similar to the hands of a watch.

The current setting on to the coast of Portugal and into the Bay of Biscay is more especially to be dreaded when strong westerly winds have blown for several days in succession, and many terrible shipwrecks have taken place in the vicinity under such conditions. Her Majesty's ship *Serpent* was totally lost near Cape Villano, Spain, on the 10th of November 1890, owing to this insidious set on to the land. All on board but three perished out of one hundred and seventy-six officers and men. Years ago, the Peninsular and Oriental Company gave definite instructions, compelling their commanders to give Cape Finisterre a wide berth by keeping well to the westward thereof; and the current is carefully laid down on every chart worthy of the name, yet several steamships of various lines have within the last two or three years met their fate on that coast while attempting to round the cape too closely in thick weather.

The Gulf Stream is essentially a warm-water current, and therefore of the greatest importance from a climatological point of view. It has a beneficial effect on the climate of our islands, and keeps open the harbours to the extreme north of Norway. Dundee whalers have reached the 74th parallel on the fourth meridian of east longitude; while at the same time less favoured ports of North America were closed by ice even as far south as the parallel of Bordeaux. Its course is marked out by a deep blue colour, and a well-defined ripple is plainly perceptible on the margin of the stream in fine weather. During the American Civil War, a blockade runner left Wilmington, North Carolina, one dirty night. Next morning a Federal cruiser caught sight of the law-breaker, and gave chase; but her captain providentially noticed the ripple, kept his ship

away into the favourable current, and gradually left his puzzled pursuer far astern.

Mr Everett Hayden, of the American Hydrographic Office, drew up a chart setting forth the wanderings of the schooner *W. L. White*, which was abandoned by her crew near Delaware Bay during the blizzard of the 13th of March 1888, and drifted ashore at Haskeir Island, Hebrides, on the 23d of January 1889. In this interval she traversed a distance of more than five thousand miles, and was reported by forty-five ships. The Gulf Stream brought her right across the Atlantic; and several similar instances might be quoted. Mr Paul Lange, of the Liverpool Amateur Photographic Association, when off the south of Iceland in July 1890, threw overboard a bottle containing a letter, which was returned to him some months later, having been picked up in a fjord of the Lofoden Islands. In six and a half months it had drifted eight hundred and ninety miles in a north-east direction. There is a rumour that a pair of oil-skin trousers picked up on the west coast of Greenland helped to determine Dr Nansen's route in his proposed Arctic expedition. This driftage is asserted to have come from the ill-fated *Jeannette*, abandoned in Behring Sea while under the command of the gallant De Long of the United States Navy, who lost his life with many of his officers and crew in an attempt to penetrate the icy fastnesses adjacent to the North Pole.

Between the equatorial current due to the north-east trade-wind and the similar current developed by the south-east trade-wind, there exists a complementary current setting from west to east. This unites with the current coming down the north-west coast of Africa, which is known as the Guinea Current. Captain A. Fry, in a lecture delivered at Liverpool some months since, gave an interesting example of this current, which indicates the importance to seafarers of an accurate knowledge of winds and currents. A captain took his ship to sea, intending to sail from one port on the west coast of Africa to another only nine miles distant. The land-breeze died away, but was not replaced by the expected sea-breeze. Down below the boundary-line of sea and sky receded the shore; and in a few hours great depth of water precluded any attempt at anchoring. She was swept along by the Guinea Current at the rate of five miles an hour, and after several days the land hove in sight near Badagry. Then Prince's Island was raised, and eventually Cape Lopez. She got the south-west monsoon; and proceeded along the equator, turning gradually to the northward and eastward, until the port was again reached from which she had sailed seven weeks previously. Owing to the adverse current, she actually traversed three thousand miles to no purpose.

In the South Atlantic, a current sets round the Cape of Good Hope in a westerly direction, gradually turns northward, and follows the west coast of Africa up to about the tenth parallel of south latitude, where it meets the Guinea Current proceeding in the opposite direction. The resulting body of water moves to the westward as the South Equatorial Current until the Brazilian coast is reached about Cape St Roque, where it divides into two portions.

One branch makes its way into the Caribbean Sea, the other moves down the east coast of South America; and after proceeding thus for some distance, sends off a stream to the eastward, forming in this way a complete whirl of waters, as in the North Atlantic, but in an opposite direction. The main current continues down the coast to Cape Horn, which it either goes round or mingles with the Antarctic current setting from Cape Horn to the Cape of Good Hope, which drifts huge masses of ice from the southern ice-barrier directly into the track of homeward-bound ships.

Last year, the icebergs in this part were both numerous and of exceptional magnitude. The first report was received from Captain E. H. Andrew, of the Aberdeen sailing-ship *Cromdale*, bound from Australia to London. On the 4th of April last year, a large iceberg was seen right ahead only just in time to clear it; and at daylight, an hour later, the whole horizon was found to be studded with enormous icebergs. The largest of them was one thousand feet high! The *Urania*, in about the same position, afterwards sailed one hundred and fifty miles along solid ice in which no opening could be perceived. Captain Hatfield of the *Gladys*, from Iquique to Hamburg, on the 4th of July, passed an ice island bearing traces of having at some time served as a refuge for a shipwrecked crew. A place of shelter appeared to have been formed in an icy cave, and five dead bodies of men lay near. This barque sailed for four successive days between icebergs, and fears for her safety precluded a closer search being made. No similarly prolific season for southern icebergs has been known since 1854.

An equatorial current about three thousand miles wide moves to the westward in the North Pacific. It forms two branches near Formosa; and one of them, called the Kuro Siwo, or Black Stream, keeps north-eastward until Japan is reached, and then proceeds due east for the coast of Oregon. Here it curves, follows the coast to the southward, eventually turns westward, and forms a South Equatorial Current like that of the Atlantic. In fact, the Kuro Siwo has many points of resemblance to the Gulf Stream. In the North Pacific, as in the North Atlantic, there is an equatorial counter-current about three hundred miles wide, setting east between the Northern and Southern Equatorial Currents. Attention was specially drawn to this fact by Captain J. McKirdy, R.N.R., who was wont to avail himself thereof, in order to shorten his eastern passage, while in command of a steamship in those waters. The warmer water of the Kuro Siwo penetrates the Arctic Ocean by way of Behring Strait. A cold south-seeking counter-current hugs the eastern shore of Asia after the manner of the Labrador Current, on the east coast of North America.

The circulation of the South Pacific follows the same laws as that of the South Atlantic. Cool water of high southern latitudes sweeps northward up the west coast of South America as far north as Arica, where the configuration of the coast sends the stream westward. This Peruvian Current is recognised by its low temperature of sixty degrees Fahrenheit in close proximity to sea-surface temperatures of over

eighty degrees. Thence it proceeds westward, and apparently curves gradually south, south-east, east, north-east, and north, to complete the circulation, although the drift on the western side is not so marked as in the other oceans. Two good examples of the equatorial drift are afforded by ships left to their fate under its influence. The *Ada Iredale*, bound from Ardrossan to California, was abandoned about nineteen hundred miles east of the Marquesas, on the 15th of October 1876; and was picked up by the French cruiser *Seignelay*, on the 9th of June 1877, near Tahiti, after a westerly drift of nearly two thousand five hundred miles. South of Australia runs an easterly current, due to the prevalence of north-west and south-west winds.

North of the equator in the Indian Ocean there is not found any well-defined circulation of the sea surface-water, for the monsoons and fickle breezes produce currents of variable direction and strength. South of the equator, however, the whirl is somewhat similar to that of the South Atlantic, or the South Pacific. The south-east trade-wind drives the sea's surface to the westward in about 10° S.; until, near Madagascar, it trends southward. There it divides into an easterly branch, which closes the circuit by turning northward on the west coast of Australia until the equatorial current is reached; and a south-westerly branch well known to seamen as the Agulhas Current, a warm-water stream, in the vicinity of which great changes of sea-temperature are experienced and violent storms frequent.

In either hemisphere there is a marked tendency for interchange between cold polar waters and warmer equatorial waters. The discovery-ship *Fox* drifted eleven hundred and ninety-four miles down Baffin Bay in two hundred and ninety-two days. Sir Edward Parry in his attempted sledge-journey to the far north found his intentions frustrated by the fact that the ice on which he travelled moved bodily to the southward faster than progress could be made over it to the northward.

Towards the central part of the North Atlantic is an area of high barometric readings, light winds, and variable currents. Sargasso weed, the abode of myriads of small crustacea, is met with there, but not in such extraordinary quantities as some assert. Vessels abandoned there make very little headway in any given direction. The American schooners *Wyer G. Sargent* and *Fannie E. Wolston* were abandoned in a water-logged condition in about 35° N., 72° W., on the 10th of June 1891 and the 15th of October 1891 respectively. They drifted eastward merrily in the Gulf Stream; but somehow got into the centre of the North Atlantic whirl, and were quite recently reported as having been passed afloat, but breaking up. The danger to shipping from derelict vessels of this nature cannot be over-estimated.

Many other instances might be given of the long drifts of derelict ships and bottle-messengers; but sufficient has been written to illustrate the fact that ocean currents are more especially dependent on the action of the prevailing winds and the configuration of the coasts. An accurate knowledge of ocean currents when remote from the land is not so important to

steamship navigators as their brethren in sailing-ships, yet they may not be utterly neglected when safety and a quick passage are deemed above all things necessary.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

CHAPTER II.—THE SURPRISE.

THE first thought that came into Jessie's head was to call her father; but a moment's reflection convinced her that if her supposition proved correct—if the stranger at the gate was the hunted convict—he would show him no mercy. He would deliver him up to justice, or drive him back into the foggy marshlands whence he had come. It was even more probable, she thought, that he would forbid her to unbolt the door. It might be unnatural to think so meanly of her own father; but his attitude towards her—the suppression of facts, that so deeply concerned her, for his own selfish ends—justified her opinion of him. She was not surprised: his conduct had only confirmed her in her estimate of his egotistic nature. He had lacked the moral courage to apprise her of the trouble that had overtaken John Upcraft, lest by so doing he might jeopardise his own comfort! How could she hope to win his pity for the desolate or distressed?

While she still stood there, doubtful how to act, the knock was repeated. It was louder, and showed signs of impatience. Jess no longer hesitated; she unfastened the door and looked out. It was Jim. His face was wild with excitement, and he was splashed with mud up to the eyebrows. He stood in the white mist, which he seemed to be breathing, so cold was the night-air. The light from the kitchen fire caught him where he stood outside, and showed Jess his strange appearance.

'What's the matter?' Jess put her hand upon his arm as she spoke, drew him into the kitchen and closed the door. The boy snatched off his cap and thrust it into his pocket; then he knelt down before the welcome blaze to warm his fat red hands. As soon as he could recover enough breath to speak, which it took him some effort to accomplish, he gasped: 'I ain't pretending now, miss. I ain't a-playing at convicts. It's a real game, this is!'

For a moment, remembering what Jim's mother had told her, Jess feared that her promising pupil had gone out of his mind—that the sound of the signal-gun had done violence to his youthful understanding. She placed her hand upon his curly head, and stroking it soothingly, replied: 'Why, Jim, you must be dreaming! How could your mother trust you out of doors on such a foggy night?'

'Mother don't know. You'll not tell her, miss; will you? I hasn't been home yet. I've been out on the marshes, and—and I've found him!' While he spoke, the look of wild excitement came back into his face. This strange look, and the still stranger words, set Jessie's heart beating fast.

'What can the boy mean?'

'It's true, miss—true as I'm a-kneeling here. I've found him!' Jim reiterated. 'And if you don't believe it, why, come alonger me and see

for yourself! It ain't very far—down in the marshes—just beyond the fust gate. He's a-lying beside the dike—that's what he's a-doing—half in, half out. He's a-lying with his face to the ground. I spoke to him, but he wouldn't answer. Then I got a fright, thinking of a sudden like that he was dead. I ran away. And seeing the light in your window, I ran—I ran.—You won't tell mother, miss, will you?'

The girl made no answer. She stood looking down thoughtfully into the boy's face. Presently she spoke: 'Are you warm now, Jim?'

The boy nodded.

Jess looked still more thoughtful. 'Do you think, Jim,' said she, 'if I were to go with you, that you could find the spot where you saw this man?'

'The convict?' Jim nodded emphatically.

'You'll never speak—never breathe one word of this to any one; will you, Jim?' whispered the girl, looking anxiously over her shoulder towards the study door.

'No fear, miss! They'd tell mother.'

Jess made a sign to the boy to keep still beside the hearth; then she turned the handle of her father's study door and went in.

Mr Bryce sat reading in his armchair, under his shaded lamp. He was smoking his pipe in his comfortable way. There was not a line in his face that betrayed anxiety about his daughter's great trouble. The whole affair would appear to have gone from his thoughts.

'Mrs Gilkes's boy is here,' Jessie began.

'Well, what does he want?' said her father, with impatience, as he knocked the ashes out of his pipe.

'He has got lost in the fog,' said Jess, 'and he's frightened—afraid to go home alone.'

'You are not going to take him, are you?'

'Yes. Mrs Gilkes will be getting alarmed. Besides,' said Jess, 'it's long past the boy's bedtime; and if he hasn't caught a chill'—

'The young scamp!' said Mr Bryce. 'There—take him home. There's always something amiss. I sha'n't get my supper before midnight. I know what it will be!'

Jess did not stop to argue this point. She took a flask of brandy from her father's cupboard and hastened out of the room. Jim stood near the kitchen door, eager to start on the expedition.

Jess wrapped herself in a thick cloak, and drew the hood of it over her head; then she took down an old lantern that stood on the mantelpiece—this she lit at the kitchen fire. 'Now, show the way,' said she.

Jim raised the latch, and they went out together into the fog. A lazy wind still crept up from the river, chilly and damp, over the marshland that lay before them. There was an indescribable sense of glimmer in the dense mist, as it seemed to Jess, when she became accustomed to the darkness. It was like a ghostly dream of moonlight. Jim carried the lantern: it cast limited rays of light before them. Presently Jessie felt the boy's disengaged hand groping into her own. They went forward in silence. Jim never showed any sign of hesitation; he led the way across the high-road, and into a bypath at the edge of the dike. The stagnant water was lit up in flashes from the lantern as the boy swung it to and fro. Presently they came to

a white gate over the centre of a small arched bridge across the dike. Here Jim stopped. 'That's where I saw him,' he whispered, and Jess felt his hand tighten in hers.—'There!—t' other side of the ditch—down there!' He swung the lantern as he spoke to illuminate the spot indicated.

'Give me the light,' said the girl. She pushed open the gate, and went forward with the lantern raised above her head. Jim held back, seized with the old fright; but a word from Jess encouraged him, and he went over the bridge at her side. Suddenly she felt the clutch of his fingers on her arm; she looked round, and saw him pointing into the dike. Jess crept to the edge of the bank and looked down. The light from the lantern fell upon the prostrate figure of a man with his face to the ground, as Jess remembered the boy to have described him. His clothes were torn and slimy; so were his hands. Jess knelt down to lift his head. The boy had seized the lantern eagerly, for his curiosity had dissipated all fear. He directed the light upon the man's face.

He was a young man; and his face was possibly handsome; but the features were so plastered with mud that a real mask would scarcely have hidden them more effectually. Jess uttered a suppressed cry as she raised the head upon her arm. No wonder, thought the boy, for surely such a dirty face was enough to scare any one. Jim also observed, as the girl hastened to lift the brandy flask to the man's lips, that her hand shook.

There was an anxious pause. Jessie's look never went from the man's face while she did all in her power to revive him. He drew a deep breath at last, opened his eyes, and stared blinking at the lantern. Presently he raised his eyes to the girl's face: Jim had turned the light full upon it; and instantly the man gave a great start and tried to rise to his feet.

'John!' She held him to her in her strong young arms. In spite of the marsh mire with which he was bespattered from head to foot—in spite of the ragged prison garb in which he was clothed, Jessie knew him! It was John Upercraft. He had covered his haggard, grimy face with his hands, and the white mist was creeping between their faces, as if to hide him more completely from her eyes. But she knew him, and held him closer to her—closer still. It was for him that the signal-gun had been firing, for the man she loved! She took his hands caressingly in both her own to reassure him, and said: 'You didn't think that I had condemned you?'

He bent his head and made no answer.

Meanwhile Jim stood before them with open-mouthed astonishment, directing the light from one face to the other, as if trying to read in each a rational explanation.

Jess found a footing on the slippery bank, and helped Upercraft to rise. He shivered with the cold. The girl took her cloak from her shoulders and threw it over him. 'Look, John! Do you see that light across the marsh?' said she, supporting him with her arm.

'Yes. But you mustn't give me your wrap'—

'I'm warm enough,' she interposed. 'We are quite near home. The light comes from our cottage window.'

Her words seemed to give Upercraft strength. Jim went ahead with the lantern and held open the gate; and then they stepped forward, by the way they had come, along the edge of the dike. They made slow progress; for Upercraft nearly fell to the ground more than once from fatigue before they came out upon the high-road. They were presently entering at the side-gate, Upercraft still leaning upon Jessie's arm, when a shadow flitted across the kitchen window-blind. They all three came to a sudden stand-still. Jim looked up into Jessie's face with a sudden gasp, and then took to his heels, carrying the lantern away with him.

'Rest here a moment,' said Jess; and Upercraft sank down against the low wall. 'That boy will ruin everything if I don't catch him and bring him back.' Jess soon overtook him. 'Frightened at a shadow, Jim?' said she. 'For shame!'

'It's mother. And—and,' said Jim, catching his breath—'she's come a'ter me!'

'If it's your mother, Jim,' said the girl, 'you shall run home as fast as you like. But wait till I've made sure.'

Jim accepted this compromise, and they hastened back to Upercraft. She led him to an arbour at the end of the garden and then went indoors.

'Why, miss, how white you look! Has anything happened to my Jim?' Mrs Gilkes—for it was she who spoke—was laying supper in the kitchen. She looked eagerly at the girl for a reply.

Jess quickly reassured her. 'Jim is all right. You'll find him safe in bed—I hope,' said she, 'when you get home.'

Mrs Gilkes overwhelmed Jessie with expressions of gratitude. Mr Bryce's voice presently interrupted her.

'See what father wants,' said the girl.

The moment Mrs Gilkes's back was turned, Jess looked out at the kitchen door. Jim was waiting there impatiently.

'Run home!' said Jess.

Her next thought was to send Mrs Gilkes home too. There was no need to detain her; and as soon as Jess had given the boy time to get well on his road to Little Thurrock, she despatched his mother in the same direction.

It was their custom to take supper in the kitchen. There was no help for it; her father came and took his seat at the table, and for once his egotism did good service. He never glanced up from his plate to study his daughter's face. Had he done so, her look must have roused his suspicions. She made a great pretence at eating, but not one morsel passed her lips. She was thinking—thinking—until she could hardly refrain from blurting out the whole truth. How Upercraft must be suffering, exposed as he was to the damp, chilly night! The very sight of the kitchen fire was a torture to her while he was debarred from sharing its warmth and brightness with her.

If her father had actually known that Upercraft was shivering in the cold outside—if he had tacitly planned to increase Jessie's agony—he could hardly have behaved with greater cunning; so at least it seemed to her. He always was a slow eater, and his appetite seldom failed him. But to-night—as it appeared to Jess—he ate at

a snail's pace and with the appetite of a hungry huntsman! And then—when he at last put down his knife and fork—he drew his chair towards the kitchen fire and began slowly to fill his pipe. Surely some mischievous demon had whispered the suggestion into his ear to settle himself here instead of retiring into his own sanctum! it was such an unusual action on his part. Was it because she had made the kitchen fire look so bright? It was with no thought of him, but of another to-night, that Jess had stirred it into so cheerful a blaze.

Mr Bryce, while still occupied in loading his pipe, looked round abruptly at Jess, and said: 'Well—what has Upercraft got to say for himself?'

Jess caught her breath, as if she had received a stab. Her face had betrayed her, she thought. Her father had guessed what had happened. She could not speak; she could only stare at him in blank amazement.

'What's amiss now?—Keep your eyes to yourself!' cried Mr Bryce angrily. 'Haven't you read the man's letter yet?'

'John's letter? I—— No, father; not yet.'

'Make pipe-lights of 'em! That's the best thing you can do.—Come!' said he, pointing to his meerschauim; 'don't you see I'm waiting for a light?'

She struck a match and handed it to him without a word.

And now, as it still seemed to Jess, her father smoked with more deliberation than he had even exhibited when plying his knife and fork. He smoked, and fell into meditation, and knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and smoked again, until her power of endurance was nearly spent. The clouds of tobacco-smoke that lingered over his head interminably contained the very essence of his tantalising mood.

Having at last finished his pipe, Mr Bryce began to show signs of drowsiness. He had a habit at times of falling asleep over the fire after his evening smoke. This prospect was more than the girl could bear. She began to make a great clatter with the supper plates, as she washed and stood them up in the rack. This noise had the desired effect; for her father presently rose from his chair and, gruffly bidding her 'good-night,' betook himself to bed.

Jess only waited to hear him close his door; in another minute she was at Upercraft's side. 'Did you think I had forgotten you, dear? You must be half dead with cold.' She led the way into the house.

When Upercraft had washed the mud from his hands and face—had exchanged his prison garments for a discarded suit of her father's—and had eaten and drunk of the best that Jessie could provide, he finally rose from his chair beside the fire and held out both his hands. 'Good-bye, Jess—good-bye!'

She looked up entreatingly. He was a handsome young fellow, with dark resolute eyes. He spoke with an earnest, appealing ring in his voice.

'Jess! if I don't get clear of this neighbourhood before daybreak, I shall be taken. Think what that means!'

A look of anguish crossed her face.

'You shall have tidings of me—I promise

that,' he went on.—'Don't be down-hearted, Jess. What is my trouble now—now that I know you never thought me guilty? I had begun to despair—to lose all courage—when no consoling word came from you. But I have something to live for now!'

Jess could not speak; she could only cling to him in her grief at the thought of parting. She realised what it meant—or at least what she dreaded it must mean. She might get tidings of him, though she scarcely knew how. But to-night they had met for the last time! Her brain reeled at the thought.

She sat shivering before the dead kitchen fire, half dazed, until the cold gray dawn was looking in. She stared about her, and gradually the whole scene of the night that was past rushed vividly back into her memory. She went to the window, and, drawing aside the curtain, peered eagerly out. John Upercraft was gone.

MOSES IN LITERATURE.

It has been said that the earliest historical allusion to moss in any writing is contained in that reference in the First Book of Kings to Solomon's botanical knowledge: 'And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall;' where it is conjectured that hyssop signifies moss. Pliny the younger in his book on Plants writes on the subject of mosses, and one moss he singles out, and gives it a name, the *Polytrichum*, which, from its golden-haired calyptra, he called maiden-hair; and this name he tells us it bears 'because it tinges the hair, and is for this purpose boiled in wine with parsley-seed and plenty of oil, which renders the hair thick and curling, and keeps it from falling. It is always green, but never flowers. It delights in dry places, and is green in summer, but withers not in winter.'

Cowley refers to this little plant, and extols its virtues in one of his poems:

I being the chief of all the hairy state,
Me they have chosen for their advocate
To speak on their behalf. Now we, you know,
Among the other plants make no small show;
And fern, too, far and near which does preside
O'er the wild fields, is to our kind allied.

And so the poet goes on, crowding a very quaint and singular poem with the conceits for which he and most of the poets of his time were famous.

John Gerard, in his *Herball*, on the subject of mosses, says: 'There be divers kinds of mosses, and those differing for the most part in their native places; some grow and are fastened to trees; others spring from the superficial or uppermost part of the earth; there be others also that grow in the sea.' And then he goes on to describe very learnedly and with much delicate discrimination the various kinds of mosses.

In his strange treatise called *Sylva Sylvarum*, Bacon writes concerning moss: 'It is true that moss is but the rudiment of a plant, and, as it were, the mould of earth or bark. Moss groweth chiefly upon ridges of houses tiled or thatched, and upon the crests of walls. And that moss is

of a lightsome and pleasant green. The growing upon slopes is caused, for that moss, as on the one side it cometh of moisture and water, so on the other side the water must but slide and not stand or pool. And the growing upon tiles or walls is caused, for that those dried earths, having not moisture sufficient to put forth a plant, do practise germination by putting forth moss.' He gives many interesting facts relating to mosses, which, however, we cannot here transcribe.

Our object in this paper is not scientific; it is not to trace the history and classification of mosses, or to point out the different species of the plant, their structure and characteristics; but it is a much simpler and more agreeable one, namely, to show how frequently they are referred to in our best literature, and what loving treatment they receive at the hands of some of our greatest writers of prose and poetry. It is only rarely that mosses are mentioned in literature by name. The famous African traveller, Mungo Park, will always be associated with the *Fissidens Bryoides*. He was five hundred miles from any European settlement, in the midst of savages, plundered of his clothes, hungry and depressed in spirits, but the sight of this little moss in flower cheered his heart and inspired him with new courage.

Our greatest living prose writer has abundant references to moss. In the *Lamps of Architecture*, Mr Ruskin writes of the 'company of joyful flowers' in the Jura, 'all showered amidst the golden softness of deep, warm, amber-coloured moss.' In the *Notes on the Turin Collection*, the 'moss arabesques of violet and silver' are among the 'wonders of the real Swiss foreground.' In *Modern Painters* we have quite a detailed description of mosses: 'On the broken rocks of the foreground in the crystalline groups, the mosses seem to set themselves consentfully and deliberately to the task of producing the most exquisite harmonies of colour in their power. They will not conceal the form of the rock, but will gather over it in little brown bosses, like small cushions of velvet made of mixed threads of dark ruby silk and gold, rounded over more subdued films of white and gray, with lightly crisped and curled edges, like hoar-frost on fallen leaves, and minute clusters of upright orange stalks with pointed cups and fibres of deep green and gold, and faint purple passing into black, all woven together, and following with unimaginable fineness of gentle growth the undulation of the stone they cherish, until it is charged with colour so that it can receive no more; and instead of looking rugged, or cold, or stern, as anything that is a rock is held to be at heart, it seems to be clothed with a soft dark leopard skin, embroidered with arabesque of purple and silver.' In another place this wonderful word-painter endows with a kind of moral influence or instinct the mosses and hepaticæ which we meet in our daily walks, representing them as 'full of pity, covering the scarred ruin and the old wall with a strange and tender honour.'

Tennyson is also very happy in his allusions to this subject. His mosses, it has been remarked, always give the very image that is needed. He begins his *Mariana* with the lines:

With blackest moss the flower-pots
Were thick encrusted one and all—

an image which at once sets before us the neglect of the garden which surrounded the disconsolate lady in 'the moated grange.' Again, he says in the same poem:

About a stonecast from the wall
A sluice with blackened waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The clustered marish-mosses crept.

The same faculty which enabled him to draw such subtle subjective pictures of womanhood as Adeline, Isabel, and Eleanor, enabled him to see, and therefore simply to describe, in one of the most distinctive of his earlier poems, how

The creeping mosses and clambering weeds,
And the willow branches hoar and dank,
And the wavy swell of the souging reeds,
And the wave-worn horns of the echoing bank,
And the silvery marish flowers that throng
The desolate creeks and pools among,
Were flooded over with eddying song.

Nothing could be so soft as 'the cool mosses deep; in which, as on a couch, 'the mild-eyed, melancholy lotos-eaters' dreamed away the happy hours:

Here are cool mosses deep
And through the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

Keats in like manner conveys the idea of repose by the use of the word moss. In his *Ode to Psyche* appears the exquisite stanza:

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
In some untrodden region of my mind,
Where branched thoughts, new-grown with pleasant
pain,
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind;
Far, far around shall those dark clustered trees
Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by steep;
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lulled to sleep.

In his *Endymion* he shows us the 'enmossed realms' of Pan, and 'little caves' wreathed

So thick with leaves and mosses that they seemed
Like honeycombs of green.

And again:

A jasmine bower, all bestrown
With golden moss.

He carries us along 'winding mossy ways' to see the 'violets bind the moss in leafy nets,' and says:

Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet in her mossy nest.

Shelley tells us that the streams and rivulets

Between the close moss, violet interwoven,
Have made their paths of melody.

In the garden where grew his 'sensitive plant,' there were 'sinuous paths of lawn and of moss.' And there, too,

The rose-leaves, like flakes of crimson snow
Paved the turf, and the moss below.

From the pages of Wordsworth we may glean a whole literature of mosses. He is the poet of Nature; and the little things as well as the great—we may almost say the little things more than the

great—are glorified by his genius. In his poem of *The Thorn* we meet with the following description :

And close beside this aged thorn
There is a fresh and lovely sight,
A beauteous heap, a hill of moss
Just half a foot in height.
All lovely colours there you see,
All colours that were ever seen ;
And mossy network, too, is there,
As if by hand of lady fair
The work had woven been ;
And cups the darlings of the eye,
So deep is their vermilion dye.

Writing of the little mountain-flower called the Alpine Catchfly, he says :

There cleaving to the ground it lies,
With multitude of purple eyes,
Spangling a cushion green like moss.

How exquisitely he sings of 'mossy stones' in his poem of *Nothing* :

I saw the sparkling foam,
And with my cheek on one of those green stones
That, fleeced with moss, beneath the shady trees,
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep,
I heard the murmur, and the murmuring sound,
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease.

Amongst the mountains and lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland, where Wordsworth's inspiration was quickened and purified, his neighbour, Hartley Coleridge, observed and studied the mosses with the eye of a friend and lover. When in the town he yearns 'for the brook with moss-girt fountain welling.' Moss in winter seems to have a special charm for him, and he is even jealous lest the spring flowers should supersede it in the love and admiration of any. With a kind of impatient regret, he says :

Now the old trees are striving to be young,
And the gay mosses of the Christmas days
To the fresh primrose must forego their praise.

And again he writes of winter mosses :

Though night and winter are two gloomy things,
Yet night has stars, and winter has the moss,
And the wee pearly goblets that emboss
The lumbering wall on which the redbreast sings,

The chalice mosses and the velvet green
That clothe November with a seemly dress,
As furry spoils that warm the red-haired Russ
Shield not the poor from blasts unpitied.

Childe Harold carries us back to the days when woods were haunted and every streamlet had its myth. In describing the fountain of Egeria, Byron says :

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
With thine Elysian water-drops : the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
Whose green wild margin now no more crasse
Art's works.

Hood's midsummer fairies

Enrich gray stems with twined
And vagrant ivy ; or rich moss, whose brown
Burns into gold as the warm sun goes down.

In a charming volume of Essays, now almost forgotten in favour of newer though by no means fresher books, Alexander Smith says in his description of Dreamthorp : 'Never was velvet

on a monarch's robe so gorgeous as the green mosses that beruff the roofs of farm and cottage when the sunbeam slants on them and goes.' Again he says : 'Every fissure has its mossy cushion, and the old blocks themselves are washed by the loveliest gray-green lichens in the world, and the large loose stones lying on the ground have gathered to themselves the peacefulest mossy coverings.'

Eugénie de Guérin as she moved about over the plains of Languedoc longed to know botany, that she might enter more closely into 'the herbs, the flowers, and the mosses that she knew by name.'

Caroline Southey in portraying the occupations and pleasures of English country-life describes a

Rustic rough-hewn bridge,
All bright with mosses and green ivy-wreaths.

And she tells us of a shallow, sparkling stream, a favourite fishing-haunt of her father's,

Where the green moss
Sloped down to meet the clear reflected wave,
That lipped its emerald bank with seeming show
Of gentle dalliance.

Mrs Browning alludes to the softness of the plant when she says in *The Lost Bower* :

As I entered, mosses hushing
Stole all noises from my foot.

Milton rests Adam and Eve on a 'mossy seat ;' and makes the lady in *Comus*

Awake the courteous echo
To give me answer from her mossy couch ;

while for himself he prays :

And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew,
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.

A contemporary of Milton, Francis Quarles, has the following quaint image :

And stormy blasts have forced the quaking trees
To wrap their trembling limbs in suits of mossy frieze.

Spenser often uses imagery derived from moss ; but his moss is often nothing but lichen, as on the 'two goodly trees . . . with gray moss overcast ;' but in the lines,

As hoary frost with spangles doth attire
The mossy branches of an oak half dead,

he seems to call it by its right name.

Cowley speaks of 'the mossy brooks and springs, and all inferior beauteous things.' And Dryden reminds us of the uses to which moss was put by our forefathers :

Houses then were caves, or homely sheds,
With twining osiers fenced, and moss their beds.

In the lovely lament over Fidele's grave, Shakespeare says :

With fairest flowers
While summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I'll sweeten thy sad grave : thou shalt not lack
The flower, that's like thy face, pale primrose : nor
The azured harebell, like thy veins : no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,

Out-sweetened not thy breath : the ruddock would,
With charitable bill

bring thee all this ;

Yea, and furred moss besides, when flowers are none,
To winter-ground thy corse.

And in connection with this allusion we are reminded of Collins's lovely *Dirge in Cymbeline*, which has the verse :

The redbreast oft, at evening hours,
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss and gathered flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

From all that has been here said, it will be seen that moss, insignificant as it may seem to ordinary people, has occupied no little space in the pages of literature.

UNDER THE CHERRY-TREE.

THE STORY OF A SUMMER DAY.

By DOROTHEA GERARD.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

'THIS is what I call something like a decent cherry year !' soliloquised old Mother Resi while she busily tied up the groaning branches. 'It's ten summers and more since I have seen them so big and red and juicy. We shall have full baskets, I warrant ; and full baskets for the like of us means full pockets. Gracious ! where should I be without my cherry-tree ! Not its equal to be seen for miles around.—But, bless me, is this a visitor for me ?' And shading her eyes with her hand, Mother Resi gazed along the glaring high-road which climbed its way towards the little Tyrolese village, in the neighbourhood of which is laid the story of this particular summer day.

A white sun umbrella was rapidly approaching ; and presently, from beneath its shade, there emerged a spruce, muslin-aproned young person, who, her eye being caught by the red gleam of the cherries, came to an abrupt stand-still. 'Good-day to you. Are these cherries yours ?'

'Yes, they are mine.—Your question warrants you new in these parts. Every child hereabout knows my cherries.'

'Why, then, you must be Mother Resi.—Now listen, Mother Resi. I am Frau Netti, the wife of the confectioner in the town, and I have walked out through a mile of dust to taste these renowned cherries. Let's see if they are as good as their name.'

With every cherry that she critically swallowed, the features of the confectioner's wife softened. 'What perfume ! what aroma !' she murmured, well-nigh ecstatically. 'The very thing for my *compotes*.'

'How many pounds can I serve you with ?'

'No pounds, my good woman—trees, if you had them ; but, as it is, this one treeful will have to do. I will pay market price.'

'But I am a poor widow, a very poor widow indeed.'

'Well, well ; let's say two kreuzers beyond market price.'

'Fairly spoken, Frau Netti. Gracious ! where

should I be without my cherry-tree !—Now, let those rascals so much as squint at the fruit, if they dare !'

Frau Netti inquired whether there were thieves in the village ; upon which Mother Resi plaintively explained that everything between five and fifteen was a thief—that every boy in the place had his fingers itching and his mouth watering after her cherries, and that—taking up the corner of her apron—they had robbed her summer after summer, poor widow as she was, with nothing in the world but her cherry-tree and her Sepperl.

'Well, well,' broke in Frau Netti, who did not care for tears. 'No doubt it is very sad ; but I must be gone. Mind you keep a careful watch on the cherries until they are gathered. Think of our bargain. I must have all, or I will have none.' And Frau Netti tripped off again, the way she had come, leaving Mother Resi in a state of blissful bewilderment. Two kreuzers beyond the market price ! And all sold in a lump ! No tiresome dragging to market, no danger of bruised fruit at the bottom of the baskets !

'I always said that all my luck was in my cherry-tree,' she chuckled, as she tied up the last branch. 'And now it's time to be stirring the mid-day soup. Sepperl must look after the cherries meanwhile ; it's about all he's good for.—Where has the silly lad hidden himself ? Sepperl ! Sepp ! Seppi !'

It was not until his name had been shouted out in several more varieties, that the long and lanky son and heir of the house slouched into sight, with his shirt sleeves rolled up to his elbows and a broom in his hand.

'Take time, take time. Is it me that's wanted ?'

'Sure enough, for want of a better. Is it to sweep the cobwebs out of your silly pate that you're holding the broom ?'

Sepperl looked sheepish. 'No ; it was for the dust on the parlour floor, and I was thinking that as the neighbour's Mirzl said she would look in upon us this afternoon'—

'Everything else might go its own way, ha ? Have you not managed to get that girl out of your head yet ?'

It was with a very resounding sigh that Sepperl gave answer : 'I haven't tried.'

'Moonshine—nonsense ! Now then, sit down here, you and your broom. Shut up your mouth and open your eyes. Do you see the cherries there ?'

'I should think I do. They would make a fine cherry tart, and Mirzl dotes on cherry tart.'

'Cherry tart indeed ! Bread, dry bread, that's all that grows on cherry-trees for the like of us ; and we won't get even that much unless you sit still here till I'm back again, and never turn an eye from the cherries.'

'But Mirzl dotes on cherry tart.'

'Well, well, if you mind the cherries and keep the village rascals off with your broom, I'll bake you a cherry tart for your Mirzl, but a small one, for I am a poor widow.'

'Hurrah !' shouted Sepperl, left alone under the cherry-tree. 'Next week, Mirzl and I shall eat cherry-tart, and next year we shall dance at our own wedding.—Oho ! you good-for-nothings !'

Is it my cherry tart you'd be after? Wait a bit; I'll tell Mirzl! and with his broom, Sepperl made a dash at a couple of school-boys with obviously questionable intentions. Returning somewhat heated to his post, he was astonished to perceive a fair-haired young lady in a fashionable cream-coloured dress—at least Sepperl concluded it must be fashionable since he had never before seen the like of it—approaching along the pathway on the other side. She walked slowly, with her eyes on the ground.

'But what can she be looking for?' reflected Sepperl. 'There are no cherries on the ground,' he remarked aloud as the cream-coloured dress drew near. 'It's higher up you must look; but if you touch them, I'll tell Mirzl.'

The young lady raised her head with a start. 'What is the man talking about? Cherries? Ah, I see. Make your mind easy, my good lad; it is not your cherries I am after, but my lost locket. I know I dropped it on this path.'

'Locket—locket? What's that?'

'A thing one wears round one's neck.'

'Aha, a sort of keepsake thing, I take it to be.'

'I missed it while I was walking over the meadow with my aunt, and ran back to look for it, but could find nothing. Next, I hurried after my aunt, and could not find her either; so here I am now without locket and without aunt, and with aching feet that refuse to carry me further.'

'Come, come,' said Sepperl good-naturedly; 'very likely by this time your aunt has found your keepsake, and then you would have both back again.'

Sepperl, who had wished to say something especially comforting, was astonished to see the young lady turn pale. 'Good gracious! I had never thought of that! But it would be too terrible; it must be prevented.'

'What's terrible about it?'

'My good lad, it's a long story, and you would not understand. There is something inside that locket which my aunt must not on any account see. Oh, to think that while I am wasting my time here, it may be in her hands already! I must go on hunting—if only my feet did not ache quite so badly.—Listen, lad: are you inclined to earn a florin?'

'I should rather think I am. A florin will buy an apron for Mirzl at the fair.'

'Then go and look for my locket.—But run, run, before my aunt finds it.'

'Take time, take time,' said Sepperl, doubtfully scratching his head. 'It's all about the cherry tart, you see. Mother said I wasn't to turn an eye from the cherries.'

'If that is all, you can go with an easy mind; I shall watch your cherries meanwhile.' And quite regardless of her pearl-gray Swedish gloves, the young lady resolutely took the broom from the hands of the astonished Sepperl.

Sepperl still lingered and still scratched his head. 'But supposing she beats me'—

'I will give you two florins if you go this minute.'

'Hurrah! That will buy earrings as well as an apron.—I'm going, I'm going; but take time! And mind you watch the cherries, or else my back will be aching to-night. Don't forget that

the tree belongs to a poor widow, who else will have no bread for herself and her children, and no cherry tart for Mirzl and me. Think of that, and sweep the rascally village children off with the broom.'

'Yes, yes, yes! I promise everything; but only go.'

At last he was really gone; and pulling off her wide hat, the young lady looked round for a seat, and, finding no better, sat down, broom and all, in the shadow of the cherry-tree.

The pretty face wore an anxious frown, as it was easy to see, now that the jealous shade was removed; and in truth Countess Angélique Lilienburg had grounds for looking anxious, for she was in what is vulgarly termed a 'fix.' That lost locket, which ever since the last carnival she had clandestinely worn round her neck, contained the secret of her hero-worship. It was a foolish thing to do, and, above all, a thing not at all up to date, for although hero-worship is likely to survive the nineteenth century, the fashion of wearing the hero's portrait in a locket, and, above all, of dropping it unawares, has long since given way to more practical contrivances. The only excuse that can be made for the sentimental foolishness of this young lady is that she had grown up within the walls of an ancient feudal castle, in the shadow of the blackest of pine forests, and under the care of the crossiest of old aunts, all of which elements—the aunt included—were wonderfully conducive to the growth of romantic sentiments.

'The very instant I have the locket again,' she now bitterly reflected, 'I shall certainly take out the picture and tear it to shreds, or else burn it to ashes—or else lock it away in a safer place.'

And then she fell to wondering whether he would ever come back from his travels, and where he was spending this day. Perhaps at the North Pole, perhaps at the equator. She hoped he had plenty of furs and a good sun umbrella; but she hoped it rather drowsily, for she had walked far and the day was hot.

'If only that lad would make haste! So it is to a poor widow that the tree belongs, and she looks to it for bread for herself and her children. I fancy he said something of the sort. Poor woman! How strange that there should be in the world people heartless enough to rob a breadless widow! I shall watch—her—cherries—very—faithfully.'

Countess Angélique was asleep in a bower of cherry branches, with her head against the tree stem, very much to the satisfaction of various small villagers of both sexes who had been on the watch for ten minutes at least.

Another ten minutes, this time of perfect enjoyment to the marauders, had passed, when they were scared off by the appearance of a tall gentleman, who with one hand was mopping his forehead and with the other vigorously using his hat as a fan.

'So I am not mistaken; it is a cherry-tree! As good as a dessert table spread for my own especial benefit; and a thirsty wayfarer will surely be absolved of his sins even if he swallow some half-dozen cherries, which, strictly speaking, belong more to his neighbour than to himself. Nectar and ambrosia! I must have some more!'

And, suiting the action to the word, the stranger gave a vigorous shake to the tree.

Among the patter of falling cherries, he seemed to hear something that was like a yawn, and a cream-coloured cloud moved in the shadow of the branches.

'Some one here?—Is it you, Countess Angélique?'

'Baron Blasewitz!' stammered Angélique, rising dazed from her mid-day siesta. 'How—where have you come from? I thought you were in Africa!'

'And I thought you were at Ostend.—But, pardon me, what *can* you be doing here? And with that broom?'

'I am guarding this cherry-tree; therefore, beware of my broom! You must know that the tree is the property of a poor widow, who together with her three little children—I think he mentioned three children—is reduced almost to starvation point. And imagine the base wickedness of the world, Baron Blasewitz—dishonest people prowl about and watch for the moment when they can pillage the branches unseen. Is it not incredible that such unscrupulous wretches should exist?'

'Quite incredible,' assented Baron Blasewitz, furtively wiping his mouth. He was not afraid of facing either lions or ice-bears; but the courage to proclaim himself one of the unscrupulous wretches afore mentioned failed him at this moment.

'And now that you know my business here, you might satisfy my curiosity by telling me what yours is.'

'Mine? It is nothing, really not worth mentioning; at least—that is to say'—

'He is not shy usually,' reflected Angélique. 'I wonder what makes him so embarrassed all at once?'

'I saw this tree from afar, and as I noticed that it had such fine cher'—

'What?'

'Such a fine shade, I thought I would rest here a little while.'

Angélique thought she began to see clear. Her aunt was always talking about the flippancy and frivolity of this young man—supposing she should be right, after all. This spot under the cherry-tree was the very place for a rustic *rendez-vous*, and there were some very pretty peasant girls in the village—commonplace, of course, but that would not matter to a frivolous man. What treachery! And after all that had passed between them on that last carnival day! No wonder he was embarrassed.

'Well, there is the tree, Baron Blasewitz,' said Angélique aloud, in the iciest tones she could command, 'and there is the shade. I hope you have found what you looked for.'

'Oh, I have found far more than I ever would have ventured to look for! How could I guess what a treasure was hidden among these branches!'

'Baron Blasewitz!' stammered Angélique, stepping back.

'Your pardon, Countess Angélique; but the delight of this unlooked-for meeting has gone to my head.'

Angélique dropped her eyes and played with the handle of the broom. The chances were that

her aunt was quite right about the flippancy and the frivolity; and yet how his voice trembled, how earnest his eyes looked!

'Ever since last carnival I have carried your picture in my heart.'

'And I hid in my locket,' whispered Angélique to herself.

'My uncle sent me on my travels to amuse me; but it was no use. Give me but one word of hope, and no sacrifice will be too great to win you by, no labour too hard. All will go well, even if your aunt'—

'My aunt!' And with a start she seemed to come to her senses. 'If my aunt were to come upon us now! She never would believe that this meeting was a chance one.—Oh, Baron Blasewitz, leave me; I must go; my aunt may appear at any moment—I must go.'

'And the cherries? And the poor widow with the five children?'

'Good gracious, I had forgotten them! What shall I do? Ah—a happy thought: I resign my post to you.'

'To me?' almost gasped the Baron.

'Yes, precisely—to you. Why do you look so amazed? You talk of sacrifices and labours, and yet refuse the first trifle I ask of you.'

'For your sake, Angélique, I am capable even of guarding cherries. I accept the post; pray, hand me the bayonet—I mean the broom.'

'Here, take it quickly. Be watchful and wide-awake; I shall come again, but with my aunt.'

And in another minute the Baron was standing, broom in hand, alone under the cherry-tree.

'Thus far, therefore, has Love brought me,' he dreamily soliloquised—'even to a cherry warden. It is I who am responsible to her for these cherries. What bliss that she should deem me worthy of so much confidence! This broom which I received from her hands, how ravishing it appears to me! I could almost press it to my lips, if only it were somewhat less grimy.—Halloa! Here come the unscrupulous wretches at last. Let me show myself worthy of my post.' And half-a-dozen village urchins, with lips and fingers richly smeared with red, flew shrieking before the broom.

TOWARDS THE NORTH POLE.

A WONDROUS glamour veils the frozen sea

That guards the region of eternal snow;

A voice seems ever crying, soft and low,

'Come, sons of men, unlock the mystery,

And set the door of knowledge wide and free;'

And many hearing, may not choose but go:

The bones of brave men strow the way, they know,
Still forth they speed, to find the long-sought key.

Oh, gallant spirits! whom the Northern Pole

Draws, as a magnet, to the realms of night,

Where nature lies in desolation's blight—

Sail on, undaunted, to the distant goal,

For Fame's refulgent crown awaits the soul

That seeks death's gloom, to win the world more light.

C. G.

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CROMER CRABS AND THEIR COUSINS.

AS Everton is noted for its toffee, Burton for its ale, Melton-Mowbray for its pork pies, and Yarmouth for its bloaters, so Cromer, on the coast of Norfolk, is renowned for its crabs. Other places, to the right and left, have a share in reaping the crustacean harvest on the North Norfolk coast; but they do not give their names to their spoil; the crabs which their fishermen catch are 'Cromer Crabs.' The fishing-ground is a rocky area extending for twenty miles along the coast, and for about four miles out from the shore. There are eight miles of it to the west of Cromer, and twelve to the east.

Both the crabs and their cousins the lobsters are caught by means of traps called 'pots,' familiar objects to visitors at those seaside resorts, where this branch of fishing is pursued. These pots are quite a modern invention, having been introduced between twenty and thirty years ago. Before that time, hoops were used, weighted with lead, and with a net stretched beneath, into which fell any crab or lobster engaged with the bait when the hoop was hauled up. The work was very laborious, for, as long as the tide served, the hoops had to be continually examined. As soon as the last of the series had been raised, back the men went to the first. When the tide ran too strongly for the hoops to be worked, they were brought ashore. As they did not imprison the fish, it was useless to leave them in the sea.

The traps of to-day are one foot nine inches long, by one foot three inches wide at the bottom, which is a frame of heavy iron bars supporting bows of wood, over which is stretched thick string netting of home manufacture. A funnel-shaped aperture in each side conducts the crab or the lobster to the interior of the cage, while a side-door, which can be easily let down, provides for the withdrawal of the captives. The pots run away with a considerable portion of their owners' hard earnings. They cost about six shillings each by the time they are fitted up; the netting has to be renewed every year, and not a few are

carried off or cut adrift by passing ships. The Cromer men are more liable to this misfortune than their neighbours at Sheringham, as their ground is more in the track of vessels. Occasionally lines which have been cut by ships and steamers are seen at low tides, and the pots to which they are attached are recovered; but in spite of this, many lose from twelve to twenty pots in a single season.

The men work in couples, and the two partners will own between them from sixty to eighty pots. These are taken out to sea a few at a time, and unless damaged, are not again brought to shore until the end of the season. To each pot is attached a stout line ten fathoms (sixty feet) in length, and to this line are affixed a number of cork-floats, looking like so many dirty ship biscuits. On the float nearest the free end of the line are cut the initial letters of the owner's name.

The pots are not sunk close together, but are separated by a considerable space, so that ships may have a chance of passing between the floating lines. To an ignorant landsman, it would seem a matter of great difficulty for the fishermen to recognise the spot where their pots were deposited, and to single out their own property from that of their neighbours; for, in the height of the fishing season, the surface of the water is so dotted with floats that sufficient room for additional pots can scarcely be found. The task, however, is less like that of looking for a needle in a bottle of hay, than the uninitiated would imagine. By carefully noting, when the pots are laid, the relative position of prominent landmarks, the men are able to find their own lines with comparative ease. The pots can be examined only during slack tides, because when the water is high the floats are covered and out of sight.

While in some respects lobsters and crabs are identical in their habits and manners, there are other points in which they greatly differ, and these have to be regarded by their would-be captors. As is not unfrequently the case with relatives, it is better that they should dwell apart,

and, as a rule, this fact is recognised by them, the lobsters keeping near the shore, while the crabs are mostly met with farther out. A crab which ventures within reach of a lobster does so at the peril of his life. If seized by his aristocratic cousin, he will assuredly be killed by him, and not only killed, but eaten. No crab is allowed to enter a pot into which a lobster has made its way; and if one should be there when the lobster arrives, there will soon be nothing left of him but the shell. These empty shells are sometimes all that remain to tell the fishermen what they might have had if their visit had been more fortunately timed.

The lobster is much more agile than the crab, and having eaten whatever food he can find within a pot, clambers about the netting until he discovers one of the ever-open apertures in the sides, and then he passes once more into freedom. When fishing for lobsters, it is therefore necessary for the men to examine their pots as frequently as possible. Crabs, being slower in their movements, do not so readily escape, and an extra good haul is anticipated if the pots are unraised for a longer period than usual.

Lobsters are not only evilly disposed towards crabs, but, sad to say, they do not bear goodwill to one another. As soon as they are safely landed, their formidable nippers are encircled with a piece of string to prevent them mangling their neighbours. They are most pugnacious creatures. If two happen to meet in a confined space, they will at once 'make for' each other's eyes. In the words of an ancient mariner, 'they fight like men.'

Perhaps it is because crabs are less active than lobsters that the pots, into which it is hoped the former will crawl, must be moved to fresh ground every time they are examined, otherwise few or none will be caught. On the other hand, the pots for lobsters may be dropped on the very spot from which they were raised, without the subsequent catch being thereby lessened.

In the matter of food, our crustacean friends have dissimilar tastes, and this fact is manifested in the character of the bait used. The crab likes his meat to be quite fresh; while the lobster, in spite of the avidity with which, as we have seen, he will clean out the shell of a newly-killed crab, prefers flesh that is decidedly 'high.' Indeed, the staler it is, the more tempting it is to his appetite. The bait is placed between two leathern thongs, and is kept in its position by a sliding button. It formerly consisted mainly of portions of small flat fish, locally called 'butts,' which were sent in great quantities from Lynn and Yarmouth. These, however, are much less plentiful than they were, and therefore plaice, codlings, or any other fish that happen to be handy, are used.

Along the North Norfolk coast, large open boats, which carry a small, dark-coloured sail, are used in this fishery. They are much too heavy to be brought upon the beach, or even to be launched by the two men who form the little crew of each; but, by the men of several boats helping each other, the difficulty is easily overcome. Instead of the rowlocks being formed in

the usual way by the insertion of pegs in the gunwale, they are holes in the sides of the boat. These have the great advantage of preventing the oars being lifted out of their places by heavy seas, and also of affording convenient means of conveying the boat high and dry upon the beach. On the return to land, when the boat has grounded, oars are run through the rowlocks, and being grasped by men on either side, the vessel is carried to a spot where it will not be floated by the advancing waves.

The Cromer fishermen are not a numerous body; all told, they do not now number quite seventy, and are gradually becoming still fewer, for their sons do not, as a rule, take to the sea. Most of the Cromer men have therefore long passed the heyday of youth. The fishing population of the neighbouring village of Sheringham is more than four times that of Cromer, and is increasing, for it is the exception there for the boys of a fisherman's family not to follow their father's calling.

Crabs may be caught all the year round. There is no close-time, but the regular fishing season generally begins at the end of March, and lasts till September or October. Occasionally, it begins in February. The weather is the principal factor in determining when the pots shall be laid down and when they shall be removed.

Long before the end of the season, the pots become thickly covered with long weeds, through which imprisoned fish can with difficulty be seen. Vegetation also attaches itself to the lines, and makes them slippery. They have therefore to be brought ashore from time to time and cleaned. The professional way of doing this is to make the line into a coil, leaving two or three feet at one end free, and then, seizing the end, to repeatedly swing the whole overhead and forcibly dash it upon the wet sand, over which it is dragged by continuing the circular motion of the arm. When the line is judged to be sufficiently cleansed, it is hung up to dry, and at the end of a week is fit to replace another that has become too foul.

Lobsters are protected for a month—from June 25th to July 25th, the height of the hatching season. When the fishing for lobsters begins, they have just changed their shells, and are so hungry that more are then caught than at any other time of the year. As soon as they get firm and strong, they 'take the ground'—in other words, go into holes, and then the catches are smaller. Lobsters under eight inches in length may not be brought ashore. Those of the minimum size weigh half a pound, and usually leave this world from the supper and dining tables of the local hotels. At those establishments, lobsters weighing from one-half to three-quarters of a pound are greatly preferred to any others, and none scaling over a pound are willingly bought. The fishing-ground off Cromer produces plenty of lobsters reaching the respectable weight of three and four pounds, and some manage to escape capture until they weigh from five to six pounds. Very large fish cannot get into the pots, but reach the bait from the outside, and are hauled up while thus pleasantly engaged, or are caught on the hooks when the men are 'line-fishing.'

The protection of the law is to some extent thrown over crabs of tender age, for those which

are less than four and a quarter inches across may not be brought ashore. Those landed vary from half a pound to a pound and a half in weight; but the larger ones are not numerous, three-quarters of a pound being the average weight of the individuals sold in the course of the season. Crabs of this size are too small for the London markets, although they find a ready sale elsewhere. Cromer crabs are disposed of chiefly in Norwich and Yarmouth. They are sent thither alive. In cool weather they will live for three days after being drawn from the water; but in hot weather they do not survive twelve hours.

The number of crabs captured annually on the north coast of Norfolk is almost incredible. Mr Frank Buckland calculated that the fifty Cromer boats of his time would, even if the luck was bad, catch a thousand daily, which would give for the season a total of 158,000; while for a good season the captives would amount to 1,422,000. It is mainly the weather which makes a season good or bad. When the temperature is low, the creatures remain in their holes. Warm weather tempts them to wander abroad, and then it is the fishermen have a chance of entrapping them. In winter-time it is no unusual thing for good crabs and lobsters to be found on the beach after a gale. A rough sea 'scores' or destroys their beds, and some of the animals so disturbed get washed ashore. Many years ago, cartloads were picked up after one exceptionally heavy gale. The men feared that the ground had been depleted; but the following season was one of the best they ever had.

It is more than probable that a large buyer, ignorant of the peculiar arithmetic adopted by the captors of Cromer crabs when disposing of those dainties, would be somewhat surprised at the number he received in response to an order, say for a hundred. For some inscrutable reason, two crabs are counted as one, the two being called a 'cast,' and six score of these is called a hundred; so that the buyer of a Cromer hundred actually gets two hundred and forty. This strange method of computation is not followed in the case of lobsters; they are counted in the ordinary way.

Mr Frank Buckland's attention was officially directed to the fishery on account of its deterioration through the destruction of little crabs and of lobsters full of spawn. His Report resulted in the legislative enactments to which reference has been made. The Cromer fishermen, at any rate, would welcome the imposition of further restrictions. As the law at present stands, crabs which, by reason of their diminutive size, may not be sent to market, may be used as bait.

The Cromer men profess to release all the immature fish which they draw from the sea, and declare that any of their number who used little crabs for bait would suffer a greater loss of pots than could be attributed to the accidental cutting of the lines by passing vessels. Similar damage would befall any Sheringham man who ventured to try his luck on the Cromer ground. 'They have spoilt their own ground,' say the Cromer men; 'but they sha'n't spoil ours.'

When the crabs and lobsters have gone into their winter-quarters, then the herring-fishing begins. Terrible work this is, for the poor men have to remain at sea all night in their open boats.

Long-line fishing also is followed during the autumn and winter months. To each line are attached some eight hundred hooks, which are baited with mussels, an operation which occupies a good five hours, as the protecting shells of each mussel must be forced open before the fish within can be impaled.

But there are times when fishing is not the most profitable employment that can be pursued. Many of the Sheringham men have every year a spell of agricultural labour; while, during the height of the visitors' season, most of the Cromer fishers are engaged with the bathing-machines and pleasure-boats.

If the reader is a lover of lobsters, may it be his or her happy lot to visit Cromer when the fishermen are rejoicing in good luck, for then the price falls as low as sevenpence a pound; but even when the catches are not particularly good, the hawker's cry may be heard: 'Here's some rum uns; here's some big uns, all fresh boiled, and only sixpence each. Here's a treat this morning.'

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL*

CHAP. XXX.—TANDERJEE RECEIVES A CHEQUE,
AND DANIEL FINDS A KEY.

GEORGE SUFFIELD was troubled by Isabel's letter, and by a gentle note from his father which he received about the same time—his father said he had heard disquieting rumours about cotton, but he would leave them to be talked over when he came down for Christmas, unless George thought there was anything of pressing importance to communicate—for they both had heard, 'on good authority'—matters, in fact, of which he had hoped that no one outside them suspected the existence. Yet it was characteristic of George that the fact of his proceedings being guessed at or suspected scarcely made him doubt the sufficiency of the means he had taken to keep them hid: it did little more than make him angry with the 'good authorities'—whoever they were—who had been so prying as to guess or suspect. So he merely wrote to his father that he had nothing disquieting to communicate; and then he wrote to Isabel with reassurance and fervour—and in the heat of the reassurance and fervour he went on in the course to which he was committed, and from which he saw neither reason nor necessity for departing.

For the cotton business was rapidly coming to a head—coming to such a head and gathering of offence as the trusting George did not suspect. All things seemed going well. Prices had gone up and down, just as Gorgonio and George had hoped they would. And that cargo of Indian—for which George had given Tanderjee an advance—had arrived, and had proved a conspicuous success. It had been of good quality, and had helped to raise the reputation of Indian in the market; and since there was the rumour of more of as good quality from the same quarter, it had sent down prices sufficiently to enable Gorgonio to make many more large purchases with the view to

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cornering. And yet prices kept pretty much at a steady level in their careless way; for, though many believed that Gorgonio was trying to corner, no one believed that he could—that he had either money or experience enough—but especially not money enough—to carry him through.

George was thus in very hopeful mood when, one day early in December, Tanderjee came to him in the city office of the Suffields. He carried in his hand a roll of sample cotton, which, after a brief word of greeting, he opened out before George. 'It is good—is it not, Mr Suffiel?' he said. 'It is clean, soft, long. It is excellent cotton—think you not, sir?'

'It is very good, certainly,' said George, after examining it. 'Indian, I suppose?'

'It is Indian, of course, Mr Suffiel.'

'And you want me to do something with it, I suppose?'

'My people is very poor, and Mr Suffiel' is very rich: it is what the wise say—the rich man have the advantage. My people will gladly sell you at reduced price, on the old terms, as before, again.'

'How much is there?'

'There is sufficient, Mr Suffiel', to fill two steamer.'

'That is a great deal. I don't think I can do anything without consulting Mr Gorgonio: I must ask him how it would affect our other business.'

'That is all quite correct, Mr Suffiel'. Send for Mr Gorgonio at once: the telegraph will bring him.'

So George sent a telegram to Gorgonio, inviting him to come over at once from Liverpool on business, and Tanderjee departed for an hour or two. Gorgonio came with speed and a look of expectation, though he already knew all about the business, and had been waiting in his Liverpool office for the arrival of the summons. George set the matter before him, and he appeared to consider the carpet very deeply and closely. Then he raised his head and spoke. He begged Mr Suffiel' to observe that the business was like this: The cotton would in any case come to Liverpool; for their purpose they did not wish more cotton to come for some weeks; but cotton *would* come. What then? Was it not better that he should have the control of it from the beginning, than be compelled to reckon with it, deal with it, and perhaps fight with it when it came?

'Buy it, then, Mr Suffiel', said Gorgonio—'buy it, and let me receive it for you, and warehouse it, and sell it gradual, by parcels, at the top price.'

Finally, George agreed to that suggestion; and when Tanderjee came in to receive his answer, he said he would buy the cotton on the former terms, and that Tanderjee might tell the Bombay people to draw on him at once for three-fourths of the amount. But Tanderjee urged a further request, with a low bow and his hand on his heart.

'My people, Mr Suffiel', is very poor, and you are very rich; they have advise me that some money which they must pay me I will pay myself if I get the money from you. It will save the exchange from English into Indian, and from

Indian into English again, and it will be very much more convenient for me in time. So, Mr Suffiel', if you give me cheque now for them, I pay myself, and it is quite correct.'

The statement seemed obscure, but George thought it was probably all right, and that its obscurity was only due to Tanderjee's constrained English; moreover, he had done business a good many times with Tanderjee and had always found him straightforward and correct; and, therefore, being on the whole a simple, honourable, and kindly Englishman, he wrote out a cheque for seven thousand five hundred pounds, with which Tanderjee departed, leaving the air musical with his profuse thanks.

Next morning, Daniel Trichinopoly, while his master was occupied at the works, found he had business to do on his master's account in the town; and when in town, he called on Mr Tanderjee. Mr Tanderjee received him in his private office.

'You have come, my son,' said Mr Tanderjee in Daniel's native tongue. 'It is well, yea, twice well; for all is ready on my part. What of yours, my son? Do you in deed and in truth bring the plans in your bosom?'

'I have searched all places, and all drawers in the office and in the house of my master, O worshipper of the sun, but I have found nothing!'

'Ah, still nothing, my son! Still nothing, and nothing, and nothing!' said Mr Tanderjee, pacing up and down and waving his arms, while his spectacles gleamed with distraction. 'Is this, my son, the realm of Chola that we two dwell in, or is it the realm of deceit? You permitted the son of a dog and a pig, the Gorgonio, discover our secret of the plans, so that he has demanded his share of the reward! He has said, "The knife should be applied where there is flesh!" It is shameful to tell it, and painful to weep over it! And now—now!—there are no plans! And all things else are ready!' Tanderjee looked as if he could 'tear a cat' in his despair.

'There is still time, O worshipper of the sun,' said Daniel sweetly. 'It is impossible that we should go away until the Festival of Christmas is upon us. And there is still one place to search and examine; but it is difficult.'

'Oh, let not difficulty make your heart faint, O cunning one! For is not the way to wealth difficult, and the door-step to riches slippery? What is the one place still to search, my son?'

'It is the great box of iron that is called "Safe," that stands in the office like a shrine. No man, as I hear, has ever seen it open, and when my master opens it he locks the outer door. Methinks there dwells in it the demon or spirit that brings the Sahib Suffield and Sahib George their luck!'

'You are but a fool, my son Daniel. You have learned the religion of the English Sahibs as a deaf man listens to a song. You are still in the bonds of your native ignorance. The safe is but a strong box. See; I have one, and there is no demon in it.'

He opened the door of a very small safe let into the wall over the fireplace, and let Daniel look in. But Daniel seemed scarcely reassured.

'That box, O worshipper of the sun,' said he, 'is only a toy compared with the box I have

seen. And, moreover, how know I that a little demon does not dwell in your box when it is shut up for the night?

'The successful man knows no fear,' said Tanderjee. 'Be you successful, and you will laugh at the demons. The safe of Sahib George opens with a key, my son: where does the Sahib George keep that key?'

'It is that key, I believe, O worshipper of the sun, which the Sahib keeps in the pocket of his trouser, and fastened with a chain round his waist. Sahib George would defend that key with his life.'

'You must get possession of that key, my son.'

'I cannot do violence to my master,' answered Daniel. 'Moreover, if I offered violence to my master, which of us would prevail?'

'Your wits are becoming dull, O cunning one,' said Tanderjee. Then suddenly bethinking himself, and frowning, he stepped up to Daniel and shook all his fingers in his face. 'We dwell in deceit, my son! You hide your meaning under green leaves of stupidity! When the jackal becomes fat he can hunt no more: is it not so, my son? The English Sahib feeds the dog well, and it longs to dwell with him—is it not so?'

'Is it good to cut a man's throat after gaining his confidence?' said Daniel sulkily. 'Is it well to betray a man who has fed you with his bounty? The Sahib George has given me his confidence, the Sahib has fed me with his bounty: you may take the key of safe yourself, O worshipper of the sun: I will not!'

Daniel was turning to the door, but Tanderjee intercepted him. He shook his fingers in Daniel's face; he threatened; he cursed—in Tamil—and finally he whined, for Daniel stood calmly listening to all his moods.

'Why will you make me frantic, O cunning one?' said Tanderjee. 'You mean it but for a pleasantry—do you not?—that you may see I need you as much as the carpenter needs a saw. Think you the reward I have promised is not enough, O cunning one? Is it so?'

'If a man sells his honour for a Cash,' asked Daniel, 'can he buy it back for a Crore? I will sell my honour only for a Crore, O worshipper of the sun, so that I may have wherewithal to buy it back.'

'You are a hard bargain-driver, O cunning one,' said Tanderjee. 'But I will increase your reward to half of the money which I have received when you put into my hands the plans.'

'Copies of the plans, O worshipper of the sun.'

'Be it so—copies of the plans.'

Then it was arranged between them that Daniel should find means as speedily as possible to handle the key of the safe, and to take a wax impression of it, which he would give to Tanderjee, and that Tanderjee would thus get made a copy of the key, which he would give to Daniel. It was for some time a point of contention whether or not Daniel when he had discovered the plans should bring them to Tanderjee for aid in the copying; Tanderjee thought he must; but Daniel—clearly distrusting Tanderjee—thought he need not: he was clever enough to do the

copying himself in the place where he should find them.

It was now necessary for Daniel to tell first of all what key was the key of the safe. That very evening, when George sat alone at dinner, Daniel made an attempt.

'With regard, Mister George,' said he, with simple guile, 'may I be permit to ask the question: what you keep at the end of the chain which chain you like a prisoner?'

'A key, Daniel,' answered George carelessly.

'Nothing but a mere simple profane key, Mister George?' exclaimed Daniel. 'If I am not very troublesome to mention, the same time I must say it is singular and strange, etcetera, for a gentlemen to wear a key tied with a chain to the middle of his body. With regard—I beg to excuse, Mister George—why that key do not it hang on its respected nail like other key? But it would not be an astonishment to know that it is a pet key, a key of worship, a key of gold.'

'It is in a sense a key of gold,' laughed George, taking the bright little steel instrument from his pocket, 'for it is the key of the safe.'

'Ah,' said Daniel. 'The key of safe? And may I beg to know? "Safe" is called that great box of iron in the Sahib's office?'

'That's it,' said George, tired of the subject.

It was not difficult for Daniel—in spite of his contrary protestations to Tanderjee—to find an opportunity to hold the key a few minutes in his hand in the frequently recurring aid he gave to George in dressing or undressing; and when a copy of the key was made, it was not difficult for Daniel—not very difficult—to open the safe, and to search for the plans, in spite of the genius of the Suffields which resided there; and when the plans were at last found, it was not beyond the powers of Daniel—had he not been carefully taught reading, writing, ciphering, and drawing by good Englishmen?—to make excellent copies of them.

On the whole, then, there is no room for amazement that Christmas had not yet come, though it was at hand, when Daniel sent a note to Mr Tanderjee, containing these words only: 'All is ready. Prepare.'

THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

THE great scheme of an iron band to connect the extreme eastern with the extreme western boundaries of the giant Empire of Russia is at last in process of being carried out. The Trans-Siberian Railway bids fair to become an accomplished fact before the British public realises that it has been begun—much less the possibilities which it enfolds. But when St Petersburg is joined by rail with Vladivostok, a new era in the intercourse between West and East will begin. Such a railway has long been the dream of Russians—certainly since the days of the Crimean War; and several years ago a Committee of Experts was appointed by the Czar to consider the various routes proposed, to decide upon the best, and to determine whether the line should be continuous from end to end, or only constructed to unite

the navigable rivers. In 1890 this Committee reported in favour of a continuous line, starting from Ufa, on the European side of the Ural Mountains—already connected by rail with Samara and the Volga Basin—and running through Slatoust, Tomsk, Krasnoiarsk, and Nijni Udinsk to Irkutsk, should thence be carried along the line of the Amur River to Vladivostok, the outermost outport of Russia in the east, and her naval and commercial emporium in the Sea of Japan.

A glance at the map will show that by this selection of route the railway will skirt the northern frontiers of Mongolia, and thus have a chance of drawing traffic from the Chinese Empire—not to mention the strategic value in the event of possible quarrels with that rival Asiatic power. But there were other good reasons for the selection. For instance, the entire length between the two termini indicated is 4900 miles; but the Samara Railway has already been carried through Ufa and across the Ural Mountains to the gold-mining town of Miarsk, a distance of some one hundred and twenty miles. By so much, therefore, is the construction of the Trans-Siberian line shortened, although one hundred and twenty miles is but an insignificant proportion in nearly 5000. But, again, the first of the three sections into which the experts have divided the line, that from Slatoust to Tomsk, is through a flat country, in which construction will be easy, which is well peopled, and which, by a small branch, can draw considerable intermediate traffic from the region of the Altai, as well as secure the increasing traffic of the valleys of the Obi and the Irtysh. This section, indeed, will drain what many people regard as the future granary of the Old World. We are too much accustomed to think of Siberia as a barren, inhospitable region of frost and ferocity; but as a matter of fact there are three Siberias—frigid, temperate, and torrid. And the railway is designed for the most part to traverse the temperate and most productive belt.

The second section, between Tomsk and Irkutsk, has probably not much to expect from the products of the soil; but, on the other hand, this is, perhaps, the richest auriferous region of Siberia. The third section, from Irkutsk to Vladivostok, is the most difficult and expensive of all, having to run through a country very thinly populated, in parts, indeed, one might say uninhabited, with an inhospitable climate, and presenting many engineering difficulties. This will be the most costly part of the line, both to construct and to maintain.

It is proposed that there shall be stations every thirty miles or so along the whole line, and that the wider rivers shall not be bridged, but crossed by steam-ferries. The probable cost is variously estimated at from thirty-five to fifty-five million pounds; but judging by experience of the work so far, it is more than probable it will exceed the higher figure.

Some Russian critics have rather objected to a route having been chosen which for a considerable distance exposes the line to risk of damage by Manchurian bandits, if not of interference under the ægis of Chinese officials, who, as a class, are by no means yet favourably disposed to railways. But the advantages are held to outweigh the dangers; and, moreover, it is understood that Russian diplomats have arranged a satisfactory understanding with the authorities at Pekin.

The Report of the Committee of Experts above referred to was in due time followed by the issue of an Imperial ukase ordering the construction of the railway. It is said that the Czar's advisers were much divided on the subject, owing to the immense sum of money involved, and that it was because of these differences of opinion that the Imperial order was not given until May 1891. One does not hear that any of the Czar's advisers pleaded for the expenditure of the money in a way much more calculated to improve the condition of the Russian peasantry—namely, by the extension of railway communication in European Russia. The matter was regarded as a military one, the opponents of the railway contending that the money could be better applied on fortifications and so forth; while the advocates of the railway contended that it would be more useful than fortifications, and certainly not less valuable in the defences of the Empire.

And here it should be mentioned that the idea of a railway across Siberia was first suggested by General Mouravieff, the governor of East Siberia during the Crimean War. It is, perhaps, not generally remembered now that one of the first operations of the allied forces was an attack upon the Russian outposts in the Pacific; and the narrow escape which Russia had on that occasion of being permanently shut off from the Eastern seas, led to a great development of her military arrangements in Siberia. It was then that the danger to which the Czar's Asiatic dominions are exposed by their separation from the base of supplies suggested a railway. Like the Trans-Caspian line—which, by the way, there is a plan to run northward to join the Trans-Siberian line at some future date—the Trans-Siberian railway is political and military in origin and design.

The line is being built from both ends, but most effort is in the meantime being directed to the eastern and most difficult section. About the middle of 1891 the first sod was cut at Vladivostok by the Czarevitch; and since then the work has been steadily prosecuted. For about two hundred and fifty miles from Vladivostok the line passes through what is styled the Ussuri section, being the country watered by the Ussuri branch of the Amur. This is an undeveloped region of great mineral wealth, but so diversified in its physical aspects as to provide many tough engineering problems. Wherever practicable, tunnelling is being avoided by detours, the engineers even preferring to build an embankment on which to carry the line round a hill than to cut through it. In the same way, a deep narrow inlet of the sea near Vladivostok is not being bridged, but the line is taken round it. One can under-

stand the avoidance of tunnels on the score of cost, but what saving can there be in the case of the bridge? None whatever, but the reverse—only military authorities declared the bridge too open to attack from a hostile fleet.

Some six thousand men, mainly Russian soldiers and Chinese labourers, are employed on the Ussuri section, which is expected to be open next year. It has cost, so far, about thirteen thousand pounds per mile, on which basis the entire railway would cost not thirty-five or fifty-five, but nearer sixty-five, millions sterling. But, as we have said, this eastern section is the most difficult, and will be the most expensive part of the work. On the other hand, it is to be remembered that the present railways in Russia have cost on the average about seventeen thousand pounds per mile, and that, although Siberia is exceptionally level, and is well supplied with timber, &c., yet the inhabited districts are widely separated, and climatic conditions must tend to serious interruptions of work. Of course the dispensing with bridges on some of the wide rivers may reduce the first cost; but this cannot be regarded as a permanent saving, as the bridges will sooner or later have to be supplied.

It is a mistake to suppose that Russia possesses great facilities for big undertakings in Asia in the way of free convict-labour. As a matter of fact, the convict problem is not less difficult in Siberia than in America, where, as has been seen, there are constant revolts against the employment of prison labour in competition with free labour. The introduction of convicts on to the works of the Trans-Siberian Railway led to complete disorganisation and frequent scenes of violence. Neither the Russian free labourers nor the soldiers would work along with them; and although, we believe, about a thousand convicts are still employed on the works, they are rather a source of trouble and anxiety than of profit to the Government.

From the western end, the Samara Railway is being actively pushed forward, and is expected to reach the Tobol River—in which is situated the city of Tobolsk—in the course of next year. From there it must reach Tomsk to complete the first section. It is a far cry from Tomsk to Irkutsk, while beyond Irkutsk the Ussuri section is but a small portion of the third great section. From Tomsk to Irkutsk is about eleven hundred miles; and from Irkutsk round the southern end of Lake Baikal, and by way of the Ussuri to Vladivostok, is about double the distance. At the present writing, there are about four thousand miles of railroad still to build. At the rate of progress of the last two years, the Trans-Siberian Railway will not be completed from end to end for other twelve years or so.

And then? Will it ever pay? That is not the question which troubles the Russian Government, any more than it affected the decision of the Czar when he applied the ruler to the map to show the route to be taken by the St Petersburg and Moscow Railway. But it must have some interesting results.

For instance, Vladivostok must become a great port; and already lines of steamers are being projected to run from there to America and Japan. In a recent Report to the Foreign Office on the trade of Corea, Consul Hillier refers

particularly to the future of Vladivostok. The port is already a place of great commercial importance, and its trade must be largely increased by the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway. Apart from the actual and potential traffic in Siberia itself, Consul Hillier points out that most of the brick-tea, which at present finds its way overland via Tientsin, will be sent by steamer from Hankow to Vladivostok for distribution through Siberia by railway. The sparsely-inhabited districts of the country will be occupied and utilised as the line is opened up, and a great increase of traffic with Corea is predicted. For four months of the year Vladivostok is ice-buried; but notwithstanding that, the natural advantages of its position, with railway communication with the west, will make it one of the most important places in the Far East. It is already a great naval station, and is strongly fortified, and as the great stronghold of Russia in the East, it will be the centre of constantly-growing activity.

But what is not generally known is that within fifty or sixty miles of Vladivostok has been discovered, and is now being developed, a particularly rich vein of anthracite coal. At present, this coal is being worked by English machinery and Chinese labour, and is sent down by lighters to Vladivostok. But a short branch will be constructed to connect the mines with the Trans-Siberian Railway; and, moreover, the whole Ussuri country is believed to be full of coal-fields. Here, then, is a great prospective source of traffic in itself, not to mention the solution of the fuel problem for the locomotives, and for the Russian steamers in the Pacific.

The whole region of the Amur is known to be rich in minerals, and gold, silver, and platinum have for years been mined, under disadvantageous conditions which the railway will remove. So long ago as 1858, there was quite an acute gold-fever in Russia, and an extensive rush took place to the Amur diggings.

It is now five years since the first train entered Samarkand, nine hundred miles from the Caspian Sea. This was accounted a great enterprise; but both in extent and in cost it does not represent one-fifth part of what is involved in the Trans-Siberian Railway, which, roughly speaking, will be about double the length of even the great Central Pacific line of the United States.

It is not reasonable to expect any great revenue to the railway from any through-traffic with China. In a few words, this expectation can be disposed of. Thus, experience in other countries has proved that railway transport under the most favourable conditions cannot be carried on with profit at less than one halfpenny per ton per mile. Let us, for the sake of argument, take eight thousand miles as the distance between Vladivostok and London, and let us assume that tea or silk could be delivered at Vladivostok as cheaply as at Hankow or Shanghai. Yet the railway rate would be, in round numbers, about seventeen pounds per ton, as against about two pounds per ton by steamer. There is thus no possibility of competition.

So much, however, has been done by railways in the opening up of the American Continent, that great things may reasonably be expected in Asia, only the autocratic system of government

is not in favour of rapid industrial development. That Siberia is capable of becoming a highly-productive country there is abundant evidence, and within the last year or two several travellers have referred in sanguine terms to the very great agricultural resources of the southern belt of the country.

Besides the great potential wheat-growing area, Southern Siberia has large tracts of land which seem specially marked out for stock-raising, and Siberian ranches are amongst the possibilities of the future. The actual gifts of nature ready to be grasped are in the trackless forests, in the bosom of the earth, and in the wealth of fur and of fish, the realisable value of which depends on accessibility of markets. A very large quantity of grain is already grown in Siberia, but as no present means exist of sending it to market, it is mainly used for distilling alcohol.

A good deal of manufacturing goes on in Siberia, recent statistics showing there are upwards of two thousand factories, such as tanneries, tallow-factories, distilleries, &c., in the provinces of Tobolsk and Tomsk alone. Siberian manufactures are for the most part sold in Asia; but markets could be found for much more in America and Europe were the railway completed. The imports of manufactured goods—almost entirely from Russia—amount to about fifteen millions sterling per annum; and of course the more the country developed internally, the more would it require the manufactured products of Europe. We have seen it stated that at Yakutsk, sugar sometimes rises to two shillings and sixpence per pound, and that valuable furs are often to be had in exchange for a little whisky!

Eastern Siberia, which includes an area of about three million square miles, and a population of one million and a half or so, has been heretofore almost entirely dependent on China for cotton, woollen, and silk fabrics. Yet this is the great mineral area of Northern Asia, the California of Russia, yielding several millions' worth of gold every year.

Whether the great wheat-lands of Siberia can ever be utilised for the supply of hungry Britain is a problem for the future to solve. But looking at the immense distances over which grain is transported by rail in America, it is not unreasonable to look at Asiatic Russia as a probable source of food-supply.

That the line can flourish, or even pay the interest on cost of construction, from local and intermediate traffic, unless there be immense agricultural and industrial development, need not be expected. Roughly speaking, there is at present in Siberia only one person to each square mile of territory. Now, in the United Kingdom the average amount of traffic is equal to about eight tons per head of the population; and in Germany to three and three-quarter tons; but in European Russia to only half a ton. On the same basis, and for the population within reasonable reach of the area of the railway, the local traffic would not amount to a million tons per annum.

In conclusion, it may be said that the distance by rail from St Petersburg to Vladivostok is computed at about six thousand miles, and that the time required for traversing this distance by train will be about sixteen days. In something

like three weeks, then, one should be able by the Trans-Siberian Railway to run from London to Yokohama, and within a month be amid the antiquities of Peking, or amid the wilds of Kamchatka or Corea.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

CHAPTER III.—TIDINGS.

THREE years went by. It was winter again. The marshlands lay beneath a thick coating of ice; the dikes were frozen pathways to the Thames; the pollards had grown white-headed with rime; and the only signs of life were the gulls coming in from the sea with their plaintive cry for food and shelter.

It was holiday-time. Jess was still a teacher at the village school. But she no longer felt ready to dance home along her path; for the promise of tidings which Upcraft had given her had never come. The girl had lost all hope. And yet she went about her duties cheerfully; the old routine of village life continued to run its uneventful course; and it was seldom that any one—unless it were her little friend Jim—detected a line of care upon her face.

One dismal afternoon—Jess having gone to spend the day with friends at Thurrock Hall—Mrs Gilkes sat warming herself over the kitchen fire. Mr Bryce was having his after-dinner nap, the only time when the woman got any rest at the cottage. Jim knelt upon the hearth-rug at his mother's side, rubbing his fat hands together, just as he knelt and warmed them upon the night of his expedition with Jess across the marshlands three years ago. Suddenly he touched his mother's arm. 'There's the firing agin!' said he, his small keen eyes glittering with excitement. 'Don't you hear it, mother?'

'Never mind the firing, Jim; get to work!' said Mrs Gilkes. 'It makes me downright queer to look at you when the convicts is abroad. It's high time you was a-growing out of it, and now you've begun to earn your own living too.'

Jim was on the point of replying, and not without impudence, to judge from his look, when there came a loud knock at the front door. He hurried down the passage to answer it. On the doorstep, under the porch, stood a tall man in a great fur coat. There was just enough light left in the gathering mist to see his face. Jim stared at him for a moment, and then gasped, as though he had received an unexpected blow in the back.

'Is Miss Bryce at home?'

'No, sir!'

'Mr Bryce?'

'Yes; he is. What—what name?'

'Tell him,' said the visitor, 'that a gentleman has called to see him.'

Jim rapped at the study door, and receiving an order to 'come in,' instantly obeyed.

'What's it all about?'

Mr Bryce sat upright in his armchair and looked sternly over his shoulder at the boy. Jim delivered his message.

'Why don't you show him in?' said Mr Bryce.

'I'm a-doing of it, ain't I?' And Jim opened the study door to its full extent.

The visitor stepped in. Having closed the door behind him with a jerk, Jim groped his way back to the kitchen as though he had been struck blind.

'Bless the boy,' cried Mrs Gilkes, catching her son by the shoulder as he leaned against the wall, 'how pale he is!'

'No, I ain't!'

'You are, Jim. You're as pale as if you'd see'd a ghost! It's all alonger the firing. You're a-worriting your head agin about them convicts,' said Mrs Gilkes. 'It ain't no good a-contradicting me.'

Jim made no further attempt at contradiction. He thrust his hands into his trousers pockets and stared wonderingly into the fire.

Meanwhile, Mr Bryce, who had been startled out of his nap, could make nothing of the visitor in the uncertain light of the afternoon.

'What do you want with me?' said he gruffly.

'Nothing. I've come,' was the reply, 'to see your daughter.'

The man's voice, and the dim outline of his face and figure as he stood between him and the light, brought a sudden look of hatred and indignation. 'Upcraft! Why, you are surely mad!'

'I'm perfectly sane.—Are you expecting her home?'

Mr Bryce got up from his chair and stood upon the hearth-rug with his back to the fire. 'I am expecting her home. But you had better not wait,' said he, in a significant tone. 'If you were a millionaire, and without reproach, you could not marry her now. You are supplanted—forgotten! Do you know Colonel Woodward? He lives at Thurrock Hall. That's the man she's going to marry. Do you doubt me? Ask the first village gossip you meet if it's not true!'

Upcraft went out without another word. Mr Bryce walked to the window and peered after him into the fog. He saw him pass into the high-road and turn his steps towards Thurrock village. Then he began to pace restlessly up and down his room. At intervals an elastic flame lit up his face; it was full of craftiness and fiendish thought. He had been scheming for years to marry Jess to Colonel Woodward of Thurrock Hall; and suddenly this man Upcraft became again an obstacle in his path!

A decanter stood on the table. He emptied the last drop out of it into his wine-glass, drank it off and then rang the bell. And now he stood grimly smiling, with his face half-turned towards the door; and he seemed as though listening to the signal-gun, that still boomed across the marshes like an ominous voice.

John Upcraft heard it too. He stopped abruptly, and pressed his hands to his ears to shut out the sound. It carried him back to that terrible night, three years ago, when he was out upon the marshlands, a miserable convict, shivering with acute ague. Surely he was still the convict—surely it was for him that the gun was firing! The old sense of horror recurred. He shook from head to foot; and it was only by repeatedly touching his fur coat and passing his hands over his limbs that he could convince himself that he was no longer in prison garb, no longer hunted. In his grief and overwhelming despair, he began to wish that Jessie Bryce had left him

to die in the marshes where she had found him. It would have been kinder, a thousand times kinder, than to have recalled him to life in order to subject him to this misery. For the moment he was sorely tempted to strike across the marshlands and reach the river-side, where with one leap he could end it all. But his better judgment soon prevailed. He conquered the momentary weakness, and went on towards the village with a growing strength of purpose in his step. There was no sense of shivering now, no thought of bending to destiny. The lights of Thurrock village had come in sight. He was erect and determined; and he presently walked into the village inn—an inn called the 'Old Hulk'—with little trace of the recent suffering to be seen in his resolute face. But the crowning test of Upcraft's moral strength now awaited him.

The bar-parlour of the 'Old Hulk' was small and cosy. There was a table in the centre, around which a number of men were seated. Some had drawn their chairs close to the board; while others sat back against the wall, seeming to prefer a more distant view of the glass or tankard to which they laid claim. The company had raised a pretty thick fog, in opposition to the fog outside, with their tobacco-smoke; and Upcraft, by way of making it denser, lit a cigar, after taking a vacant seat near the window. A light resembling an old ship's lamp hung from the ceiling. But Upcraft had no dread of being recognised, for this was almost the first time he had set foot in Thurrock village.

A silence had fallen upon the company when Upcraft came in, but only for a moment. An elderly man with a closely-shaven face soon took up the thread of talk. He gave a nod before he spoke, as if to challenge contradiction. 'So I say. He's a gentleman.'

'Ay,' chimed in a middle-aged, hook-nosed man—and a rich un too! 'What more do a girl want?'

'Look at his age!' said a youth, disparagingly. 'He's older than she be, yer see, by twenty year.'

'They haven't settled the day,' said a wrinkled person in the chimney corner, whom Upcraft took to be the sexton, 'have they?'

Before an answer could be given, a carriage drove up to the inn door, and all eyes were directed towards it. The landlord was seen to hurry out. Then the window of the carriage was let down, and a face appeared there in the light of the carriage lamp. It was Jess.

Upcraft's first impulse was to go out to the door and greet her. How beautiful she looked! A great yearning possessed him to hear her voice. He longed to touch her hand once more. But the impulse was quickly mastered. He sank back in his chair. She was in Colonel Woodward's carriage, and of course he was at her side. The taproom gossip had fairly confirmed old Bryce's words. She was Colonel Woodward's fiancée. It was too late!

Jess had stopped at the inn to inquire after a sick child. At the moment the horses were about to start off, she caught sight of Jim. The boy was flushed and out of breath. She stopped the carriage and looked out. 'What is it, Jim?'

'Let me in!' was his answer, as he raised his arm, trying frantically to reach the handle of the carriage door—'let me in!'

Jess opened the door; Jim scrambled up the step; and the carriage went on, by the marshland road, towards the cottage.

The boy's whole look and manner alarmed her. She drew him to her side, for they were alone in the carriage, and she waited impatiently for him to speak. In the silence, the boom of the signal-gun struck upon her ear for the first time to-night and set her heart beating fast.

'Look here, miss!' said Jim, the moment he recovered breath—'you know that convict? He's escaped agin!'

She caught him distractedly by the arm. Her face was now more eager than his: 'Tell me—quick! Have you seen him?'

'Seen him!' said Jim, with a wondering look. 'You know what dark eyes he's got? I know'd him agin the moment I met his eye. Don't yer remember? I never see'd his face, rightly speaking: it was covered with mud; weren't it? His eyes was what I see'd. I was a-holding the lantern, and he opened 'em on me.—Look 'ee here, miss! He opened 'em on me this a'ternoon at the front door just the same.'

'Not at the cottage, Jim? He can't have been there!'

Jim nodded. 'He didn't stop long. He had a word or two with master; and then I heer'd him go out. Then master rang his bell; and while mother went to answer it, miss,' said the boy, 'I slipt away. I ran down the road; I caught sight of him, though I couldn't catch him up. But I followed.'

'But why,' said Jess desperately, 'why have you lost sight of him now?'

'I haven't, miss. He's at the inn—at the "Old Hulk." Didn't you see him a-staring at you out o' the bar-parlour window a moment ago?'

A cry of delight was Jessie's only reply. She lowered the carriage window and put out her head. She could see a light in the cottage, shining dimly through the mist; and in another minute the carriage drew up at her home.

'Jim,' said she, laying her hand on his shoulder, 'stay where you are. I want you to take a letter to him instantly. Not one moment must be lost! The carriage will put you down at the inn. But not a word to any one—remember that! The letter I'm going to give you must be trusted to nobody. Place it yourself in his hands. Do you understand?'

'Yes, miss.'

Mrs Gilkes opened the door. 'You didn't happen to meet my Jim along the marshland road; did you, miss? He's at his tricks agin!'

'You needn't worry yourself about him,' said Jess. 'He's in the carriage, and he's going on an errand for me.' She entered the study while speaking, and finding it empty, sat down at her father's desk and wrote on a slip of paper: 'DEAR JOHN—Come back to me!—Jess.' This she put into an envelope and sealed; then she went out and handed it to Jim at the carriage window. 'You'll give it to no one else?' she reiterated—'or speak of it to a living soul?'

Jim promised; and the carriage drove away. Jess watched it out of sight; then she turned to

Mrs Gilkes, who still stood at the front door: 'Where's father?'

'Gone up to London, miss. He left a letter for you on the study table. Didn't you see it?'

'Gone to town?' said Jess, mystified.

The letter consisted of a couple of hurriedly-written lines: 'A matter of importance takes me to London. I shall not return to-night.'

That was all. There was no word of explanation. What could have induced him to take so sudden a step? He could only have one motive, as she thought—he had seen John. Angry words had passed between them: he had driven Upercraft from the house with gibes and insults; and now he had gone to London to give information against him—against the man she loved—the escaped convict.

It was pitiable. But the thought of her father's unkindly action did not greatly distress her to-night; her heart was too full of happiness. She sat down beside his study fire, rejoicing to think that he would be out of the way when Upercraft came. She would make up to him for her father's insults with loving words. She stirred the fire into a cheerful blaze; then she began to listen for his coming. He could not be long now. He would be sure to outstrip Jim, in his haste to reach her side, the moment he had read her message.

The minutes went by; but neither John nor the messenger appeared. Presently Mrs Gilkes came in with the tea-tray. Jess was sitting with her head between her hands, looking vacantly before her.

'A bit lonely, ain't you, miss?' said the woman soothingly. 'Well, it ain't to be wondered at. You'd like me to stop and sleep here to-night, maybe?'

'Yes, please, Mrs Gilkes.—How long has Jim been gone?'

'A good ten minutes,' said the woman.

'Not more?'

'Not a minute more by the kitchen clock,' said Mrs Gilkes, 'I do assure you.'

'It seems like an hour to me,' said Jess. Then she added, looking round at the tea-tray: 'Would you bring another cup? I am expecting a friend.'

The little brass kettle on the hob began to sing. John would soon be here now. In another ten minutes she might safely count upon hearing his step upon the road. Her heart beat faster at the thought. She would hurry out and call to him by name, and see his arms held out to take her to him at last.

It was getting late. The ten minutes had stretched into an hour—an hour into two—and still there was no sign of John Upercraft's coming. What could the reason be? If the boy had not found him at the inn, he would surely have returned to tell her of his failure long ago. She became filled with the dread that something had happened. Mrs Gilkes's restless step in the kitchen told Jess that Jim's mother, too, was getting anxious. She could stop indoors no longer. She drew on her hooded cloak, and went to the kitchen in all haste.

'I'm going down to the village, Mrs Gilkes,' said she, 'to look for your Jim.'

'Thank 'ee, miss! I am a bit worried about

him,' said the woman tremulously; 'though he's old enough now, you would think, to take care of himself; wouldn't you?' While speaking, she lit the lantern. Jess took it from her, and stepped out into the cold and heavy mist.

She was painfully reminded, as she groped along, of that night when out upon the marshes three years ago. But the air was keener to-night, and the mist far denser. But she went bravely on towards the village, stepping upon the rays from the lantern as fast as they fell in her way. How silent the marshlands seemed—how desolate! Nothing audible but the pattering of her own hurrying feet upon the frosty ground. The noise of the signal-gun had ceased at last.

But presently the pattering of other feet caught her ear. She stopped to listen, thinking that the sound might be the echo of her own. But no: they still came on—nearer and nearer.

It was Jim's step! She recognised it now. She raised the lantern above her head and called to him loudly. She received no answer, except a quickening of the pattering feet; and in another moment Jim—hot-faced and horror-stricken, as he looked—came within the narrow circle of light.

'Jim! What is it?'

'I—I've found him!' said Jim distressfully.

'Where? Wasn't he at the inn?'

'No, miss, he wasn't.'

'Is he there now?'

'No, no, miss.'

'Then where—where is he?' said Jess.

Jim burst out crying. 'Mur—murdered,' sobbed the boy, in a frightened whisper, 'in Thurrock Wood.'

THE GENIUS OF LEONARDO DA VINCI.

It was in that golden period in the history of art, the few years between 1490 and 1520, when the greatest painters whom the world had ever seen were living and working together, that Leonardo da Vinci flourished. Bright, indeed, were those days for Italy which saw Michael Angelo, Raphael, Correggio, Giorgione, Benvenuto Cellini, and Titian. The son of a notary at Florence, and called Da Vinci from the place of his birth, Leonardo, who was born in 1452, created for himself a name that can well be placed in the list of his most illustrious contemporaries. He was at once painter, poet, sculptor, anatomist, architect, engineer, chemist, musician, mechanic, and philosopher, although his fame now rests on his accomplishments as a painter. While young he was placed under Andrea del Verrocchio, a painter and sculptor of some note, who employed the youth to execute one of the angels in a picture of 'The Baptism of Christ.' This he did with so much softness and richness of colour, that it far surpassed the rest of the picture. Verrocchio, when he saw this, was so struck with mortification, that he never again took up his brush, and confined himself to his sculpture, 'enraged that a child should thus excel him.'

It happened about this time that a peasant on the estate which his father owned brought him a circular piece of wood cut from a fig-tree, and desired the young painter to make him an ornament for his cottage. His father urged the boy

to grant the request, and a most unlooked-for production was the result. The boy gathered from the neighbouring swamps all kinds of hideous reptiles—adders, lizards, toads, snakes, and many other repulsive crawling creatures—and from these models he compounded a monster which he depicted as about to issue from the shield. When finished he led his father into the room, and his terror and horror proved that the boy was successful. This production was afterwards sold by Leonardo for a hundred ducats, and subsequently found its way to the ducal palace at Milan; but was destroyed in a looting raid as an object of horror by those who did not appreciate art. The poor peasant lost his promised shield, but was satisfied by another on which the boy painted the simple subject of a heart pierced with a dart.

When Da Vinci was about twenty years of age he became a member of a guild of painters, and began work as an independent artist at Florence, where he executed many pictures of great credit, in which the universality of his genius soon appeared. He was by far the greatest physiologist of his time, and the first who made a study of anatomy as connected with art. He wrote a book on the Anatomy of the Horse, and afterwards made an almost exhaustive study of the human frame. He was well skilled also in optics and geometry, was a good carver, had an excellent voice, and invented a species of lyre for himself, to which he would sing his own verses and music. He had a well-formed person, and delighted in manly exercises; was dexterous in the use of arms, and loved well to manage a high-mettled steed. The fame of Leonardo da Vinci soon spread all over Italy, and the Duke of Milan invited him to his court; and having formed a design of supplying the city of Milan with water by a new canal, Leonardo was entrusted with the management of the affair. This canal is two hundred miles in length, and is a masterly piece of engineering.

After serving the Duke in the capacity of architect and engineer, Leonardo was requested to exhibit his skill as a painter. His celebrated 'Last Supper'—his chief work—was the result. It was painted on the wall of the refectory of the Dominicans. The work took him a very long time, for he would wander about the city searching for models to serve for the various persons he wished to depict, and whenever a group or an attitude struck him he drew it on his tablets. All was finished with the exception of two persons—the one was the figure of Christ, and the other was the disciple Judas. He had wandered far, and had searched high and low, but could not find a presence noble enough for the one, or a physiognomy base enough for the other.

A year elapsed, and still the picture remained unfinished. At last the prior of the convent complained to the Grand-Duke of the unnecessary delay of Da Vinci in completing the picture. The artist in defence pleaded that he worked at the picture for two hours every day.

'May it please your Highness,' said the overbearing prior, 'he has not entered the convent doors for a year.'

'It is true I have not entered the convent,' said Leonardo; 'but it is also true that I have worked

at the picture for two hours every day. I have at last succeeded in finding a head which will serve as a model for the greatest and the most noble being that ever trod the earth. The head of Judas remains to be done; and I have for six months past frequented daily, morning and evening, the Borghetto, where the lowest refuse of the population live. I have not yet found the features I am in quest of. These once found, the picture is finished in a day. If, however, I am not successful in my search, I shall rest satisfied with the face of the prior, which would suit my purpose excellently well, only that for a long time I have been hesitating about taking such a liberty with him in his own convent.

From the fact that it was painted in oil upon plaster that was not dry, this great picture was, unfortunately, very short-lived. It was finished in 1498; in 1540 it is spoken of by Armenini as half effaced; and Scannelli, who examined it in 1642, wrote of it as 'a thing that once was.' Its beauty was not improved by the improvements of the Fathers, who, in order to reach their kitchen the easier, cut a doorway clean through the middle of the picture. In 1726, with singular vandalism, the order employed an artist, Bellotti, who pretended to restore the lost colours, but who really painted the whole picture over again; and finally, in 1770, one Mazza scraped off most of the few outlines that remained of the original, and inserted heads of his own, with the exception of three, when he was stopped by a new prior, who revered art and the name of Leonardo da Vinci.

The history of this unfortunate masterpiece is by no means ended, nor the chapter of accidents at all completed. In 1796 Bonaparte forbade any military use to be made of the chamber, but soon after one of the generals, ignoring the order or not knowing of its existence, knocked down the doors and made a stable of it. The dragoons amused themselves by adding to and embellishing the picture. For some years the room was used as a military store; and in 1800 a flood penetrated into it and covered the floor a foot deep with water, which was suffered to remain until it dried up of itself.

Such is the history of Da Vinci's 'Last Supper.' Happily, however, Francis I. had a copy taken of it, which he placed at St Germain; and numerous contemporary copies exist, although the great original is mouldering away on the wall of the convent of the Madonna delle Grazie.

In 1505, after Da Vinci had been driven out of Milan by the disturbances in Lombardy, the Florentines commissioned him to paint, together with Michael Angelo, the Council Chamber of their city. A jealousy arose between the two artists, and each having his partisans, they became open enemies. About this time the young painter Raphael came to Florence to see the wonderful works of the great Da Vinci, and they made so strong an impression upon him as to produce a change in his own style of painting. In 1513, Da Vinci left Florence to proceed to Rome, where Leo X. resolved to employ him, upon which the artist set about distilling oils and preparing varnish with which to cover his pictures. Leo, on hearing of this, said, that 'nothing could be expected from a man who thought of finishing his works before he had begun them.'

In 1516, Leonardo visited the court of the young French king, Francis I., who bestowed upon him a yearly allowance of seven hundred scudi and a residence near Amboise. Here the great painter expired, 2d May 1519, aged sixty-seven years.

The genuine works of Leonardo da Vinci are exceedingly rare. In the Louvre is a celebrated production of his, 'St Anna;' and in the National Gallery is a good specimen, 'Our Lady of the Rocks,' where it will be observed that though his figures are graceful and expressive, his rocks in the famous picture are 'literally no better than those on a china plate.' Most of the pictures now attributed to him were wholly, or in part, painted by his scholars or by imitators from his cartoons. Of nine pictures in the Louvre attributed to him, three only are considered genuine. In the Royal Library at Windsor there are three volumes of manuscripts and drawings, containing a vast variety of subjects—portraits, heads, groups, and single figures; fine anatomical studies of horses; a battle of elephants, full of spirit; drawings in optics, hydraulics; plans of military machines, and musical airs noted in his own hand. The Royal Library at Paris contains several of his philosophical treatises, one of which, the *Treatise on Painting*, has been published, and is the foundation of all that has since been written on the subject. His manuscripts are very difficult to decipher; the letters are formed in a most fantastic manner; and, moreover, the writing reads from right to left, and was written by the author backwards, and with his left hand, though to this day no one knows the reason why.

UNDER THE CHERRY-TREE.

PART II.—CONCLUSION.

In such full cry was the hunt, that when half-way round the tree the Baron came upon a lady whose approach he had not observed, it was all he could do to lower his weapon in time. During the moment of mutual amazement that followed, the lady's elderly countenance settled into an expression of displeasure mingled with disgust.

'So the African cannibals have *not* dined off him.' Something in this strain would have run her thoughts, if put into words. 'Back again, like the worst penny that ever was!'

'My deepest respects to you, Countess!'

'Good-morning to you, Baron Blasewitz. Would you mind telling me—ahem—what you are doing with this—this broom? Have you brought it back from your travels?' Here the Countess had recourse to her eyeglass for the purpose of a closer examination. 'I presume it is an African specimen?'

'Pardon me; it is the vulgar European broom. I take the liberty of introducing myself as cherry warder.'

'As what?'

'As cherry warder. This broom is the badge and sceptre of my office.'

'I don't believe a word of it, of course,' reflected the Countess. 'There is some deeper meaning here. I have always said that he is a most dangerous and undesirable person.'

'Up there, Countess, hangs the prosperity of

a poor widow who has a quantity of children—six or seven; I don't remember exactly how many.'

'A poor widow? I am a widow myself, and therefore I have always a most particular sympathy for widows.'

The severity of the Countess's features relaxed. After all, there seemed to be some truth about the matter; yet, notwithstanding, she felt convinced that the man was on Angélique's track.

'Have you not happened to catch sight of my niece, Baron Blasewitz?' she inquired, very craftily, as she considered.

'Your niece? Yes; that is to say, I saw her from a distance.' (There was no need to specify how short that distance had been.)

'He is trying to deceive me,' was the Countess's wrathful reflection.

'And where was my niece, pray, when you saw her—from a distance? I have been searching for her for this last hour in vain.'

The Baron's reply was very quietly but firmly to hand over the broom. 'Permit me, Countess.'

In her surprise, the Countess actually took it between two fingers. 'What is the meaning of this?'

'I shall be back again in five minutes; I am going to look for your niece.'

'Wait, Baron Blasewitz—stop! That is not what I meant.'

'I understand perfectly what you mean,' called back the Baron, already started on his quest. 'Make your mind quite easy, Countess; I am sure to find her.'

'Wait, Baron Blasewitz!' cried Angélique's aunt in an agony. 'I am coming with you—I am coming after you!'

'Think of the cherry-tree and of the poor widow with the eight children! were the Baron's last words as he vanished over the curve of the hill.

A poor widow with eight children—to be sure; the Countess had almost forgotten that part of the matter. After all, one could not be so heartless; that is to say, supposing there was any truth in the story. But, all the same, the situation was highly vexatious. If only Angélique were back again! It was absolutely certain that that scamp of a Blasewitz knew where she was; he had smiled so diabolically. Yes, that Mephistophelean smile enlightened her. It was all a plot. It must be baffled; but how? To follow them would be to leave the tree unguarded, and that probably meant starvation to the widow and her eight children!

'In Heaven's name, help! help! help!' burst from the Countess's agitated lips.

An apple-cheeked, cherry-lipped village maiden was the first to answer the cry. 'Where is it you have hurt yourself?' she asked, a little breathless from the pace at which she had come.

'Nowhere, my dear child; it is only my fears, my excitement. I must be off; but you, my child, remain here; take this broom. Think of the widow with the nine children; do not leave this spot.—Oh Angélique, Angélique!' And pressing the broom into the new-comer's hand, the Countess turned and fled down the pathway.

'I don't understand a word of it,' was the buxom maiden's conclusion. 'A widow, did she say she was? And has got nine children? And I am

not to leave the spot? Well, I don't mind staying, since there are plenty of cherries to eat, and I know that Sepperl wouldn't grudge them to me. But I can't get the broom to fit in at all. Nothing particular to be discovered about it, either, turn it round and round as I may. Well, I shall not let my hair grow gray over it; I shall just tell Sepperl. Oh, the sweet cherries!' And tossing aside the broom, the latest arrival under the cherry-tree set to work upon the branches.

She had been most pleasantly occupied for more than five minutes, when Baron Blasewitz reappeared over the brow of the hill, not in the best of humours, for he had failed to catch even a glimpse of Angélique. 'I am inconsolable, Countess,' he began; but here the branches rustled, and a laughing face looked out from between the leaves.

'Ha, lass! what are you doing there?—Hold, I say!—Heavens! My promise to Angélique, the post which she entrusted to me!—Leave the cherries alone, I say!'

'Mind your own business.—What can such a fine gentleman have to do with the cherries, pray?'

'Unlucky creature! what brought you here?'

'A lady, a very fine lady indeed, gave me that broom there, and said she was a widow with ten children.'

'The children seem to be multiplying in proportion as the cherries are decreasing,' reflected the Baron within himself, at the same time that he angrily possessed himself of the hand full of cherries which the girl was attempting to hide from him.

'Don't be rude, or I'll tell Sepperl,' she laughed, turning away to stuff cherries into her mouth with the other hand.

'The other hand! Give me the other hand!' cried the Baron, too absorbed in the object of the moment to heed the light step which was drawing near over the grass.

It was fortunate for Countess Angélique that Mother Resi's precious cherry-tree was not the only one which grew upon this patch of ground, for without the support of a friendly stem, it is not improbable that this much-tried young lady would at this juncture have fainted. As it was, she had to rub her eyes and look again. No, there could be no mistake; he was holding the creature's hand. Then she *had* guessed aright; it was a *rendez-vous*. 'And, oh dear, she is pretty, very pretty,' groaned Angélique at the bottom of her palpitating heart.

'Countess Angélique!' and, with a start, the Baron let go the hand he was holding, the owner of which ran off, still laughing and still in possession of the plunder. 'Countess Angélique, you perceive my embarrassment'—

'I perceive it,' assented Angélique in a voice which unluckily was not quite so steady as it was chilly.

'What can I say in my defence?'

'Pray, do not trouble yourself; I neither expect nor wish to hear any defence.'

'Angélique, why this cruelty?'

'Who has given you the right to call me by my name?'

'But ten minutes ago I did so'—

'Ten minutes ago! Ten minutes ago I was foolish and blind. Ten minutes ago, you had

not abused my confidence, abused it most unworthily'—

'But after all'—

'Oh, I can keep my calmness no longer. Answer me plainly: do you confess yourself guilty—yes or no?'

'Unfortunately, my guilt is too staring to be screened.'

'What flippancy!' she thought aghast. 'He says it to my very face!'

'Angélique, you are crying!' For in truth she had pulled out an exquisite morsel of lace and *batiste*, and was gasping for breath behind it. Of the two, the Baron was undoubtedly the most thunder-struck; nothing had prepared him for the stolen cherries being taken so tragically. 'What a heart she has!' he reflected, in a mixture of agony and admiration, and quite oblivious of the fact that the tree was being meanwhile plundered at leisure by the very scum of the village street. 'She is mourning for the poor widow with the dozen children!—Angélique!' he pleaded, 'calm yourself; it is not such a very bad case.'

'It is bad enough. Go away, Baron Blasewitz, go back to Africa; let me never see you again. My aunt was right; I should have believed her sooner.—Ah! here she comes!' as the Countess emerged upon the pathway with bonnet somewhat awry and a flounce hanging in a loop from her skirt.

'Here I have them at last!'

'Dearest aunt!' sobbed Angélique, throwing herself into her aunt's arms, 'you were right; he is a worthless man; I wish never to see him again.'

'I always told you so,' gasped the Countess, still somewhat short of breath.

'Sepp! Sepperl! Seppi!' rang out from the background; and before any more words had been exchanged, Mother Resi appeared, armed with a long-handled wooden spoon. 'Sepperl, the soup is in the basin.'

But here her eye fell on the broken branches, the torn-off bunches of the pillaged tree, and she stood still in consternation. 'So that's the way my cherries are looked after! Wait a bit, you good-for-nothings!' This time it was the wooden spoon that swept the coast clear. 'Sepperl! Sepp! The wretched boy is right enough to hide himself.'

'Take time, take time; I'm coming.' And laden with something wrapped in a red cotton handkerchief, Sepperl emerged from between the trees.

'Look at the tree!' screamed his mother, taking him by the arm. 'Where are the cherries gone to? Ha?'

Sepperl looked and rubbed his eyes. 'Well, anyway I didn't eat them, and I didn't leave them alone either. That young lady took the broom away from me.'

'And I gave it to Baron Blasewitz.'

'And I handed over my sceptre to Countess Lilienburg.'

'And I left that most objectionable broom in the hand of a pretty peasant girl who was passing at that moment.'

'What? All these have watched my cherries, and that's all that remains of them!'

'There isn't more than one pretty peasant girl for five miles round,' decided Sepperl. 'That

can't have been any one but Mirzl.—Here she comes, by good luck.—Mirzl, let's hear what you did with the broom?'

'The broom?' laughed Mirzl, as she joined the group. 'Why, I let it lie on the grass, to be sure. One doesn't require a broom for eating cherries.'

'My cherries!' cried Mother Resi. 'Even she robs me!'

'Make your mind easy; I hadn't the chance of robbing you half as much as I should have liked, for scarcely had I begun, when all at once there rushes up that rude man there and tears away my hand from the tree.'

'Rude man?' Did Angélique's ears hear aright? Could that have been the reason?—

'I could not do otherwise, my good girl. The tree had been entrusted to my care, and I was responsible for the cherries.'

A mist seemed to be rolling away from before the young Countess's eyes. She began to think she had been very stupid.

'What have you got inside that handkerchief?' inquired Mirzl, who meanwhile had been coquetting with Sepperl's red bundle. 'Is it anything for me?'

'Take time. It's something for the young lady there; but her aunt is not to see it.'

'My niece has no secrets from me,' said the Countess quickly.

'Oh, you are the aunt, are you? Then it's you who aren't to see it.'

'I am lost,' breathed Angélique in an agony, just as the well-meaning Sepperl nudged her elbow and slowly opened the red handkerchief. 'Is this your keepsake, perhaps?'

'Goodness! can that be my locket?'

'Well, it's a bit smashed up, to be sure; but that comes from the nails in my boots; but anyhow, the picture is in one piece, and do you know what I'm thinking'—

But what it was that Sepperl was thinking never came to the light of day, for at that moment Countess Lilienburg, looking over her niece's shoulder, almost shrieked out, 'Baron Blasewitz!'

The events that followed upon the Countess's exclamation came at so giddy a pace that nobody understood what was happening until it had actually happened. The Baron in reply to what he took to be a summons, sprang forward just in time to pick up a small object that had slipped from Angélique's trembling fingers.

Had he seen? was the question which dyed her cheeks redder than the ripest of the cherries that grew upon Mother Resi's tree, as she put out her hand for the morsel of paper. One terrified glance at his face was enough for the answer: yes, he had seen.

'And that locket was yours, Angélique? I may call you Angélique now, may I not?'

'I—I don't know what to say.'

'Do you find it so hard to pardon my want of vigilance as cherry warden?'

'Oh, bother the eternal cherries! That was not what put me out of temper; it was'—

'What, then?'

'That girl over there—you were holding her hand.'

'Oh, bother the clumsy girl; to me she was only a cherry-eating machine.'

'He calls her clumsy!' rapturously reflected Angélique, and in the same moment she was aware of her hand being taken.

'I may do it now, may I not?'

'No, you may not,' interposed the Countess excitedly, recovering from a momentary attack of stupefaction. 'Questions of that sort are put to the aunt first, and to the niece afterwards.'

'Take time,' advised Sepperl soothingly. 'It's too late in the day to begin scolding now. They'll have to get their own way, you see.'

'Dearest aunt!'

'A pretty business indeed! But it can't be helped now, I suppose. That unlucky cherry-tree!'

'Oh, that lucky, lucky cherry-tree!' the Baron ventured devoutly to murmur under cover of his moustache.

'Take him, then, for goodness sake, and see if you can turn this madman into a sensible husband.'

Aunt and niece had been in each other's arms for at least a minute, when the attention of the bystanders was diverted by the reappearance of the same spruce, muslin-aproned young person whose visit had surprised Mother Resi earlier in the day.

'I have come back again on account of those cherries,' said Frau Netti, going up to Mother Resi. 'You had better gather them at once, for there are thunder-clouds rising. Wet fruit won't keep a month.'

'They're gathered,' said Mother Resi, wringing her hands, 'but by other fingers than mine.—There, look at the tree!'

Frau Netti turned and looked, and in her amazement almost dropped her sun umbrella. Was this poor battered and stripped caricature of a cherry-tree indeed identical with the richly-laden specimen which had rejoiced her connoisseur's eye scarcely an hour ago?

'Those good-for-nothing village rascals,' sobbed Mother Resi, disappearing behind her apron. 'But as for its being my fault!—'

'Whose fault, then? In truth, there is no putting trust in these peasant folks!—Good-evening; I shall buy my cherries elsewhere. A very good-evening to you!' And the confectioner's wife flounced off with her sun umbrella at a distinctly aggressive angle.

'Two kreuzers beyond market-price,' came in gulps from Mother Resi. 'I'll never get such an offer again.'

'What was the value of the cherries?' asked Baron Blasewitz, feeling that this was not a day on which he could with any patience bear the sight of tears.

'At least forty florins.'

'I shall give you fifty.'

'And I as well,' Angélique hastened to add.

'You may put me down for the same sum,' said the Countess with a tolerably good grace.

'A hundred and fifty florins!' Mother Resi's broad countenance reappeared from behind the apron. 'Well, well, to be sure, it's a better cherry year even than I thought. I don't remember having seen its like in all my living days.'

'Nor I either,' unhesitatingly assented the Baron.—'What say you, my love? Have you

ever known such ravishing cherries as grow upon this tree!'

The question was put in an undertone, and Angélique's answer is not on record.

A LINK WITH THE PAST.

BEFORE me lies an old pocket-book, bound in faded red leather, with silver clasps. I have counted the leaves of old yellow paper and find there are two hundred of them. It is an ungainly-looking article for a lady's pocket-book, but this one belonged to my great-grandmother, and pockets *were* pockets in her day. (If anything was lost in her house, her sons would say, 'It must be in Noah's Ark,' meaning one of her pockets. She always wore two, one on each side.) The latest date in it is 1775. Her firm handwriting, the slowly, carefully formed letters, show the serious business that using ink on paper was in those days, and even now the ink is black as jet.

A pocket-book should show the character of the possessor. This one tells the tale of a life; for there are more medical recipes in it than any others, though I find many cookery recipes, such as, 'My Aunt Betsy's Way of making Mince Pies,' &c.; and other entries, as 'John Hunter came to pay me one year's rent for his cottage at Wild Moor, Two pounds fifteen shillings, September the 22d, 1769.' Or, 'Paid my maid, Febe Barber, fifteen shillings for one quarter's wages, 14th day of March 1772.'

My great-grandmother was the widow of a doctor, who had settled down on his marriage in a country cottage in North Hampshire, on an open tract of common land, surrounded by moorlands and water-meadows, often half-flooded over by the river that ran through them, desolate enough in winter, but lovely beyond description in summer. Her short married life, as I have been told, was a very happy one. Her husband's love, till the grave parted them, was that of a devoted lover. He died, leaving her with two boys, one four and the other two years old.

After she had braved the first days of sorrow and the nights spent in grief, her boys would creep into her room in the morning and lay their heads on her pillow, wet with her tears. Then hope would come back. Amongst her neighbours she was counted rich, for she had fifty pounds a year of her own. And who in the whole country-side could distil waters as she did, or know more of herbs and medicine than she?

A few nights after her husband's death, a man came to her in great trouble. He was the tenant of the Court Farm—a man who wore leather gaiters, a long green linen smock-frock, and a straw hat of home-platted coarse straw. He knocked at her door, and, with trembling, courteous words, begged to be excused. 'But our little Ben is taken with the croup, and no one to help him now but you, dame! If you will come and see him before he dies, it will be some comfort to poor Jeannie.' He would put her on Jock, her husband's white cobby.

She straightway donned her wimple and old brown Spanish merino cloak—in her day merino

came from Spain—a full cloak, fuller than the skirts of these days. It was neatly gathered into a yoke. A black, velvet-lined tippet reached the waist. It was tied with strings at the neck, and fastened down the front with clasps. It had large arm-holes to pass the arms through. Her saddle, or pillion, was covered with thick gray quilted cloth, and hung in an inner room of her house.

When Farmer Maynard came to the door with the old cob, her maid appeared with this structure, which was hurriedly put on the back of the docile animal; and Dame Baker mounted, with the assistance of her maid Febe, who at the same moment hung a small reticule basket of white and black squares of platted straw on her arm, containing a silver spoon and a bottle of simple emetic; and then the dame started with her guide to the Court Farm, two miles distant. The Court Farm was an old red brick building standing within fifty yards of the parish church, the liegate of which they passed by in the moonlight, and the churchyard where her loved husband now slept. A firm resolve came into her heart, that henceforth, as far as she could, she would do his work amongst those who called upon her for aid or help.

On entering the house, they found Mrs Maynard sitting by an old oak crib, in which lay little Ben, throwing himself about in an agony, with the hoarse croupy groans following fast one on the other, his poor little face black and swollen. Dame Baker gently lifted him on her knee and poured out into her silver spoon a dose of her emetic, and then she asked for mustard. Alas! none was in Mrs Maynard's store. 'Bring me the kettle; we must use hot water.' She took from her neck a silk handkerchief, and after carefully rolling it up into a tight ball, she held it on the child's throat, and with her steady hand poured enough boiling water to raise a small blister. She then turned the child, and proceeded to do the same just at the nape of the neck. A short time of suspense, and then the false membrane was thrown off; then came relief, followed by a deep sleep; and shortly, health returned.

From that day, my great-grandmother took her husband's place. No doctor lived within twenty miles. Often at night she might be seen—sometimes with a stalwart form beside her, lantern in hand, leading her pony—making her way to some out-lying home. Or in the dark days of winter, when the new hedges are set in the fields, an anguished worn face, with an arm in a sling, would come to her, with the cruel, poisonous blackthorn embedded in the poor burning inflamed palm, or deep between the fingers; and with gentle, soothing words she would immerse it in some cooling cataplasm, and extract the poisonous thorn. In those days the country folk were still superstitious, and they believed she knew some charm; but, to use their own words, they would say the dame 'whispered it out.'

She never took any fee; but the farmers would send grain from their granaries to her; the Squire, game and fish; the parson, a choice plant, or tree, or fruit from his garden. The poor people would bring the herbs and roots that she asked them for; the children, nuts and berries.

In her turn, she gave liberally from her stores wherever she saw a case of need.

On the occasion of the only visit the Squire and his lady ever made to London, they brought her a beautiful pair of pattens with embroidered leather straps. (All ladies wore pattens in those days.) The Squire and his lady ordered silver rings to be put on hers, for the old Squire said, 'She deserved to walk on silver. Hadn't she cured their only son of an ague?'

Her two sons grew up good and handsome, and settled on farms of their own near her. She lived to be a little over fifty years old; but after one of her long night journeys in the snow of winter, that took her past the old gray ruins of Silchester—a place that filled her with strange mystic fancies, as she said—on her return to her home she went to bed; and when morning came, they found her calm and placid in her last sleep. They buried her beside her husband in the old churchyard, close to the red brick Court Farm. Her generation passed away, and another since. The old church and the old farmhouse are still standing, and looking the same now as they did then. But all that is left of my great-grandmother are the old recipes in her quaint handwriting in the old pocket-book with the silver clasp.

TOM AND I.

THE meadow with its clover sweet
Stretched far before our view,
The daisies grew beneath our feet,
The hyacinths were blue.
I saw o'erhead a merry band
Of purple swallows fly,
When we walked through the meadow-land
Together, Tom and I.

The linnet piped amid the sedge,
The blackbird's notes were gay,
On hill and plain, on bough and hedge,
The happy sunshine lay;
He questioned as he led my hand
I murmured a reply,
As we walked through the meadow-land
Together, Tom and I.

And oft the spring has brought since then
The bloom to pear and peach,
The violets to the lowly glen,
The green leaves to the beech,
And scattered with her fairy wand
The gray mists from the sky,
Since we walked through that meadow-land
Together, Tom and I.

And we have had since that spring day
Our share of good and ill,
And now, though old, and bent, and gray,
We're fond, true lovers still.
In perfect faith, and hand in hand,
We wait the parting nigh,
Since we'll meet in the better land
Together, Tom and I.

M. ROCK.

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A WEIRD CRATER LAKE.

It is not commonly known that the little West Indian island of St Vincent can boast one of the finest craters in the world (Souffrière), and indeed one that may be classed among the largest; for, though some craters have considerably larger apertures measured round the top, they dwindle to a small vent below; while here you can look down a ring of awful cliff, nowhere short of a thousand feet high, into a circular lake beneath you, and this lake is no less than three miles in circumference. Had you lived two centuries ago, you would have beheld a very different sight: no lake, but a vast cone of ashes rising from those depths, and tapering gracefully upward till it towered many hundred feet above even the lofty surrounding lips. This cone had become one of nature's gardens. It was studded with a profusion of trees and flowers; and the echoes of the cliffs resounded to the songs of many birds which found a happy home there—among others, the souffrière bird, peculiar to this mountain, and hence its name.

But one fine day towards the close of 1718 the giant below turned in his sleep, and every vestige of the cone, with its living adornments—birds, trees, and flowers—was blown into the skies. How long it took to effect this transformation-scene into its present condition, there is no record; only it is known that the next visitors to the heights found the lake there; though whence its waters come is still a mystery, as there is no higher land to drain into it save its own steep edges, and there must of course be considerable evaporation beneath the tropical sun. Some years ago a boat was got down to the lake, and soundings were repeatedly sought, but no bottom could be found. In 1785 the crater was again active; but it was not till 1812 that what is known as the 'Great Eruption' took place. For two years previous, a tremendous internal pressure upon the crust of the earth had been seeking some outlet, and causing earthquakes of terrible violence over an area larger than half Europe, including within its bounds the Azores, the West

Indies, Venezuela, Colombia, and the valleys of the Mississippi and Ohio. The last of these unsuccessful struggles took place beneath the city of Caracas, in Venezuela. It was Holy Thursday, 1812, and the troops were drawn up and the processions formed to honour the day, when in an instant the soldiers were crushed to death by the fall of their own barracks, the worshippers by that of their churches. Humboldt puts the number of deaths at ten thousand, many others at twelve thousand. A month later, a sound like heavy artillery was heard in the mourning city, and preparations were made to resist an advancing enemy. Little did they know that these were the sounds of their deliverance from all further danger. For it was the mountain at St Vincent that had opened again, and relieved the pressure with a three days' eruption which is among the most remarkable of the century. More than Egyptian darkness reigned on the island, but the wonderful thing is how the black dust could get in the teeth of the easterly trade-wind to Barbadoes, eighty-six miles away. But it did so. The day after the eruption was over, the Barbadians could not even distinguish their own trees at mid-day, but they heard their boughs snapping all around beneath the dense silent rain of palpable volcanic dust.

Again, as in the past century, the mountain had prepared a little surprise for the first visitors who should come to pay a call after the eruption. They found the grand old lake calmly sleeping below, as if nothing particular had occurred; but by its side was blown out a brand-new crater, so close to the original one that the wall of partition seemed to me less than a yard across at its top for a considerable distance. Evidently the subterranean passage to the lake had become so firmly blocked that even this mighty outburst could not force it.

The mountain seems to have been able to plan only one more surprise, which it put into effect in the form of the 'Little Eruption,' as it is called, of 1814, when it refused the crater opened two years before, and, with much less force at

its disposal, came through where the Great Eruption could not. The only written account extant is from the diary of a gentleman living at the foot of the mountain; and this was published in the 'St Vincent Government Gazette' of the 6th of May 1886:

'January 9th, 1814: At fifteen minutes after one P.M., a cloud of smoke was observed issuing from the Soufrière, a part of which appeared to roll down the side of the mountain towards Wallibon; and a large column shot upright to a great height. It continued to rise for upwards of half an hour, when it became detached from the mountain, and proceeded in a compact body in a direction nearly opposite to that of the wind at the time. At about five o'clock it had reached the eastern horizon, and by six had entirely disappeared. During its passage overhead the heat was excessive. This eruption was preceded by loud noises similar to those from the discharge of distant artillery.—January 12th: The craters were to-day visited by Mr Cummings and Mr Jennings. The eruption of the 9th proved to have been from the old crater, from which large rocks were ejected to considerable distances, some having been found upwards of a quarter of a mile from the edge of the crater. There is but little alteration in the appearance of the crater, but the water in it is boiling with great violence. The new crater remains unaltered. Much smoke has been seen to rise from the old one, and there is a heavy rumbling noise to be heard from the rim of it.'

And now at last came my chance of seeing this mighty Soufrière, with whose erratic history I was long familiar—one precious day in St Vincent, to be made the most of. At five in the morning four of us started on horseback, paying only three dollars each for the day. William, the midshipman, had made a rapid survey of the Admiralty chart, and pronounced the distance we had to go to be about ten miles. This was a mere nothing. But when we had gone more than twelve, there was a mutiny in our little band, and two of them indignantly rode back. William, who had so cruelly misled us, vowed to stick to me, and I declared I must do it or die. And we did it. Sixty-six miles under a burning sun did we accomplish that day; and I would go through it all again to-morrow for the sake of one hour by the side of that weird lake, whose memory will be like an inspiration to me till my dying day.

Had we known it, we could have hired a sailing-boat and gone a much shorter journey by the other side of the island. As it was, after a ride of twenty-seven miles, we left our horses when the ascent of the mountain—four thousand feet, as high as Snowdon—became impracticable for them, and toiled on foot six miles more—thirty-three in all to get there, and thirty-three to return.

Up and down, up and down—down, only to have to ascend the more afterwards—we plodded; while William's very new riding-boots were reducing his heels to something like pulp. Brave little William! It went to my heart to refuse him a drink of the last table-spoonful of water in my flask on the summit. I wanted it for my water-colour sketch.

Up through luxuriant forest for two hours did

a negro guide lead us, and then came a region wild and windy, cool and rainy, treeless, but lavishly clothed with ferns, with small red-blossoming scrub, and rich grass, whose broad blades are coated underneath with a silvery powder that comes off to the touch. Beneath were yielding cinders, and before us somewhat unyielding black snakes, which offered to dispute the passage; but though they bite, they are not poisonous. From the skirts of the forest there arose, clear and sad, the oft-repeated song of some wild bird, singing in perfect tune—



Two huge flat oval slabs—say two hundred feet long and thirty high, bedecked with a wild profusion of ferns—stand as twin sentinels of the chasm from which they were blown; and then it is but a step and the whole marvel of the volcano bursts upon you at once, not spoiled, as so many fine sights are, by being given to you in instalments beforehand. Oh the rapture of that sight!—the lake of brimstone-and-water shimmering more than a thousand feet below in the bright sunshine, with gleams of an incredible grass-green upon its bosom, and waves crested with snowy foam advancing dead against the wind, while never a whisper of their distant breaking reaches the ear; and all the stupendous sides that drop sheer into the fearful abyss are one glorious fernery, broken for about a mile on the south by a forest of small trees, all leafless, black as ink and dead; telling that it is not always peace here, and that the giant who has roused himself so lately to work this havoc may wake again.

Yes! his lair is overlaid with a fair memorial circlet of ferns, ever fresh and green; and here where the furious fires roared, where the red molten flood seethed forth, and huge rocks were shot up like so many pebbles into the sky, while the earth trembled with the thunder of the explosions—here there seems to be a funeral wreath deposited on the grave of a departed giant; but write no epitaph thereon, for if any were written it should be Resurgam, 'I shall rise again.'

The new crater has a smooth bottom of grass higher in level than the lake; and a triangular pond of transparent water, fed by a tiny stream, lies toward its eastern margin; but its sides are for the most part black and charred. We tried to pass between the two craters, but when midway, encountered a cloud coming on with such a furious charge and such a hurricane behind it, that we had to lie down to avoid being blown off the narrow ridge into the lake, a fate which we barely escaped. I have heard that 'the Indians'—that is, Caribs, who in 1735 numbered over ten thousand, but by the census of 1881 only one hundred and ninety-two—use this passage as a short-cut in carrying fish from the leeward coast; and there certainly seemed to be some trace of a path as far as we got; but even if I saw the thing done, I am not sure that I should accept the testimony of my own eyes.

We lay on the ridge until the storm abated; and glad men were we when that took place, and the fierce wind and rain and the dense fog cleared off enough to let us get back to safer ground. Thence we obtained a view of magic

beauty over the farther rim of the new crater. It was the Morne Garon, rising into the clouds from a verdant plateau intersected by a zigzag river. The perpendicular wall which the Morne presented to us was scalloped into vertical columns, across which ran alternate strata of bare dripping purple rock and vivid verdure of luxuriant ferns.

And now came the hour of reluctant adieu. One mile, and we had left the cool and rainy region behind, and were in the burning tropics again. But many miles were before us ere we could return to our ship; and it was not till three o'clock in the morning that, with the delightful sense of 'something attempted, something done,' we stretched our wearied limbs, I in my bunk, William in his hammock, to wake four hours later to a stiffness never experienced before, and to the indignant consciousness that every one laughed at us, and no one believed that we had really been to the Soufrière.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXI.—ISABEL IS WAITED FOR.

'No woman can help him and guide him better than you!'

Isabel repeated these words again and again, with a certain solemnity, the morning after she had first read them, and every time she repeated them she murmured, 'There is no mention of Love.' She was going to surrender her wealth—that idea was still vividly present with her—out of love and gratitude to her uncle and his family; must she now also surrender herself? The passion of sacrifice was, as I have said, strong upon her; but yet she was not then fully prepared to make the second surrender that seemed to be due from her. She felt herself drifting into contemplation of its possibility, because, though strenuously confident the evening before, she was now very doubtful of holding on to the hopes Alan Ainsworth had created.

She went to the Home of her Aged, and partook of lunch with them; then she drove to Victoria Station to take train for the Surrey hills to visit her father. The day was bright and warm, and she found him enjoying the December sun on a southward slope of the grounds of his abode, with a blotting-pad upon his knee, busy with pen and paper and a bagman's ink-pot. He was so engrossed with his 'Defence of Transcendentalism' that he had little to say to his daughter, and presently she left him.

When she returned to town, she found a letter awaiting her from George, in answer to her own. He wrote absolutely a lover's letter; he could not (he said) possibly be offended by anything she might say to him: it was the ambition of his life to have her always saying all kinds of things to him; he was running some risk, of course; all business was surrounded with risks; but he had no fear of results, and what he was doing was entirely for her: he was only striving to have a fit provision for her on the day when she would answer him and put her hand in his,

he hoped. Would she not come down at Christmas? He was expecting her.—That generous and confident epistle necessarily had its effect. It toned down her anxiety about her uncle's future, and it rendered the prospect of obedience to what she regarded as Uncle Harry's dying request a trifle more possible and attractive. The attention and attitude of her mind were still further changed that evening. She dined at her uncle's again—this time it was a literary dinner—and her uncle was so jovial and seemed so void of care, and the affairs of the household seemed to be so much on their usual generous basis, that—taking also into account George's letter—she felt that she had been somewhat 'previous'—as our American cousins pleasantly say—in her passion of concern about her uncle's affairs. 'How absurd of me!' she thought, 'to be so very fast! I believe there is nothing wrong at all!' And the more inclined she had been to think ruin at hand, the less inclined was she now to believe there was any likelihood of ruin: it was the natural reaction of strong feeling and vivid fancy.

But the most moving thing for her was the presence of Alan Ainsworth. Her heart leaped on seeing him, regardless of all considerations of neglect, forgetfulness, or misapprehension, and then it went out to him when she noted how pale and thin he looked, as if worn with work and sleeplessness.

'You look ill,' said she. 'Have you been working very hard?'

'He's not burning the candle at both ends,' said her uncle with a laugh—'but he's fair melting it, like th' lad that put his farthing dip into th' oven to keep it warm. He's shutting himself up too much with his writing. This is th' first time I've seen him for months, I think.'

'What is the reason?' asked Isabel with anxiety. 'Is it the play that has been wearing you out? How is it going? Why don't you read it to me? I am sure I could help you with suggestions. I think I might be at least as useful as Molière's housekeeper or Dumas' fireman. You might try it on me as one of the average public, and if I went to sleep or slipped away, you would know that that particular passage would not do.'

'You would be of no use, Miss Raynor,' said he very soberly: was he cold to her, she wondered, or was he only tired?—'as a representative of the average public, I am sorry—and at the same time glad—to say. You would be too critical; you wouldn't be content to let my effects touch you or move you: you would want to know how the effects were produced; and if they didn't touch you, you would want to examine why they didn't. Altogether, you would be too curious, Miss Raynor, and would wish to take the machinery to pieces.'

'There's a character to give me!' exclaimed Isabel to her uncle, 'which, he says, he is both glad and sorry to give!'

She spoke lightly, but she was deeply hurt by his words and by his manner of saying them: if his eyes rested on her an instant, they wandered away again, as if in search of another with whom he had rather be talking. That was in the drawing-room before dinner; and later, she was

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more deeply hurt still. At dinner she did not sit near Ainsworth, but afterwards they came together without his appearing to seek the encounter. They had an opportunity for confidential talk, of which he did not avail himself. Indeed, he spoke to her little more intimately than to a casual acquaintance.

'Are you very well?' he said.

'Oh yes,' said she in some surprise; 'I am very well.'

'I hope your father is getting on well,' he went on: 'I haven't been able to go to see him for some time.'

'Yes,' she answered; 'my father, I am thankful to say, is going on very well. He is entirely taken up,' she added with a smile, 'with his "Defence of Transcendentalism."'

Her smile was unavoidably accompanied by a wistful look of wonder concerning the meaning of this farce of conversation between them. He caught her look, and turned pale even to the lips, while she flushed with a burning glow. There was an awkward pause.

'Are you going to Lancashire for Christmas?' he asked presently with the merest politeness.

'I don't know,' she answered. 'I mean, I have not yet decided.'

Then her uncle came along, and Ainsworth left her and went and talked with Miss Bruno the novelist, who, Isabel could see, received him with marked pleasure. Isabel was not only deeply wounded; she was ashamed and angry. Her bosom heaved in a turmoil of amazement, disappointment, and jealousy, so that she had to move away and compose herself alone.

Why did Ainsworth behave thus? The fact was he was afraid to trust himself in Isabel's presence. He had to put a constraint upon himself, lest he should pour out what he longed to say, but for which the time was not yet come. Had he then uttered what was in his heart, what had once and again risen almost to his lips, much pain and stress of feeling might have been spared both to Isabel and to himself. But he held his tongue and he went away because he had pledged his word to himself that he would not ask Isabel to say 'Yea' or 'Nay' until after a certain event had taken place. The event was ripe, but it had not yet dropped. His play was ready, that is to say, and had been accepted for speedy trial: it was to be put into rehearsal at once, and to be produced if possible on Christmas Eve. The manager of the theatre, however, had promised only an afternoon performance, seeing that the play was by a 'prentice hand'; but Ainsworth was grateful for even that: it was, for a beginner, a chance in a thousand; and he had the assurance that if the play were successful, it would go at once into the evening bill: if it were not successful—it would be relegated to the limbo of plays damned and events forgotten. Taking these things into account, he had resolved that the name of the author should be suppressed, and that none but those immediately concerned—Alexander, the manager, and the company of actors—should know who the author was. Therefore, he said nothing of the production to Isabel or the Suffields: if it failed, they would be none the wiser; and if it succeeded, they would know in good time.

Next day his rehearsals began, and what with

these and his newspaper duties he was occupied day and night until the date of the play's production; so no further word had he the opportunity of saying to Isabel, until it was too late—almost.

Meanwhile, Isabel went in and out as heretofore, and seemed to the general eye as bright and charming, and as much mistress of herself as she had been wont to be. But her heart was sorely vexed. She had almost forgotten the rumours of evil likely to happen to her uncle, and she could therefore be more occupied with her own intimate affairs. She had ceased to be very angry with Alan Ainsworth, but she was still surprised and disappointed. She tried to find excuses for him—explanations even—but she succeeded very ill. She had thought that he had held aloof from her as a woman whom it was not for him to woo because of her wealth, and she had attempted to show him till she was ashamed that in that regard her wealth was nothing to her: she had done that from the first. Now she desperately concluded that, if he cared for her at all, he cared, as she had at first thought, with a friendly interest merely, and by no means with an overpowering love. Perhaps the impulsiveness of his nature made his friendships with women appear warmer than they really were; at any rate in her case he obviously had no intention of urging that his friendship should be given the complexion of love. It might be, she thought humbly, she was not the kind of woman to inspire a man like Ainsworth with a passion.

In this soreness and disappointment of heart, she turned with an agreeable sense of comfort to the frank and generous regard which George had for her—with, indeed, something like relief and gratitude. She perfectly understood the question in his letter concerning Christmas. Should she go down to the old hall, then, that had long been as a home to her, and please George, please her uncle and aunt—she knew it would please her aunt now—and please the spirit of Uncle Harry, if he still knew aught of what passed on the earth which had not been too kind to him? Did she love George? She could not declare to herself that she did; but, after all, few people who married seemed to be very much in love. She could say—as Euphemia said of her lover—'He is very fond of me;' but she could not find that so satisfying as Euphemia seemed to find it. For she was not of the passive kind of woman who find it enough to be appreciated and loved: she was of the rarer kind who must themselves love and appreciate. Yet she admired George's manly and masterful qualities, she respected him, and she certainly liked him. He was not the kind of man she had dreamed she would marry; but still—still, how many women married their dream, or even their first love? And so—and so she obfuscated her true sense of things, darkened her usually clear vision, put her hands before the eyes of heart and soul, and determined she would go down to Lancashire at Christmas.

And in the halls of the Suffields she was anxiously awaited on the day before Christmas Day. George had confided his secret and his anxiety to his mother; and his mother, in motherly fashion, became anxious too: when she had last seen Isabel, she could not get her to

promise to come north, and she did not profess to be able to forecast or to tell what Isabel would do.

'I am sorry, my boy,' said she, 'that I cannot give you any comfort. But I know Isabel too well to venture to say what view she may take of it. She likes you, I am sure—she has shown she does—but whether she thinks she likes you well enough . . . Bell has notions of her own that there is no reckoning with. I used to think that she and Alan Ainsworth took very much to each other; but I know she has seen little of him for months, since, I believe, she came into Uncle Harry's money.'

George's father observed that his son would not sit down, and that he fidgeted about from room to room, and tramped in and out and considered the weather and looked at railway time-tables. 'What's th' matter wi' th' lad?' he asked his wife. 'He's as restless as a cat on hot bricks!'

Then his wife disclosed to him the secret of the cause. He pursed his lips, nodded twice, and went and laid his hand on his son's shoulder. 'Thy mother,' said he, 'has told me, lad. Keep thy pecker up, and never say die—and put thy trust i' th' Lord.' Suffield seldom used religious phrases in his ordinary speech, but when he did use them he used them with simplicity.

'All right, dad—all right,' said George, grasping his father's hand.

Euphemia, of course, had guessed the secret already, and had her own view—which she kept to herself—of the issue. Thus the whole household waited, and watched the clock, and considered the arrival of trains. They did not enter upon this acute condition of waiting until after luncheon; for no train leaving London at a reasonable hour could arrive until about half-past two, and then there was the little appendix of a journey out of town to be reckoned. But when luncheon was past, expectation was rendered feverish by the railway time-tables. The Suffields were in the habit of travelling by one particular line, and they knew that by that there arrived an available train almost every hour up till about ten at night. There are, however, three great railways from London into Lancashire, and when they came to examine the time-bills of all three in *Bradshaw*, the total number of suggested trains—one train arriving on the heels of another, or outstripping another, all the day long—made their heads whirl. All but George then gave up the time-tables in despair and waited with resignation. He openly made out a list in three parallel columns of all the trains and then put the list in his pocket.

'I would go and meet her at the station,' said he, 'but she might come by the road.'

He went out, therefore, and hung about between two points of vantage in the park, whence he could command a sweeping view of the road on the one hand and of the path from the local station on the other. There were tense occasions when, with his list in his hand and his knowledge of the distance from town in his head, he could lay his finger on a narrow margin of minutes and say: 'If she came by *that* train, she should arrive about now.' But she did not arrive, and George still waited and hovered to and fro.

His father had wandered into the village to gossip with some of the old folk about their colds, their rheumatisms, and their asthmas; but his mother and sister sympathetically observed him from the windows of the drawing-room.

'Brother George, brother George!' murmured Euphemia in one window, where she sat with a neglected novel in her lap, 'do you see anybody coming?'

'You should not make game of your brother, Phemy,' said her mother from the other window. 'We shouldn't watch him like this, poor lad!' And she rose and walked into the depths of the room. 'It seems like sacrilege. We should be ashamed.'

'Well, mother,' said Phemy, 'he shows how he feels very publicly.'

'It's his nature, my dear,' said her mother proudly, 'to do everything openly.'

'He must be very fond of Bell,' said Phemy—'fonder than I thought he was. I'm sure Clitheroe never waited about like that for me!'

So it wore on till tea-time and dark. When tea was brought in, Phemy called her brother, and he came. But he would not sit down: he swallowed cups of tea, tramped about the room, and looked out of window.

'Happen,' said his father, who had returned from the village charged with news to which his wife gave but a preoccupied ear—'happen she thought she'd have lunch first—and I don't blame her—and then she'd catch that train at two—the best train of the day: it gets you here in plenty of time to get ready for dinner. That's the way to travel: from a good meal to a good meal; then you're not too tired by your journey.'

'Bell likes her meals good and regular,' said Phemy.

'Her school-life,' said Mrs Suffield, 'got her into the habit of having everything regular and up to time.'

'Bell is the only woman I know—except mother,' said George—'that can appreciate the whole of a good dinner. Most women don't care what's set before them: they seem always to prefer tea and talk!—Tea and talk!' he exclaimed with great contempt.

'Quite so, my lad,' said his father. 'And it's very bad for them; but they won't believe it.'

'Isabel,' said Mrs Suffield, 'knows what's what: I must say that for her. She eats well and wisely. She knows that good food makes good blood; and that good blood means good life for herself, and the chance of good life for her children after her—if she has any.'

Upon that all were silent, and George went out again—though it was dark—to his sentry-duty between the two points. But still Isabel came not—came not even by the train her uncle had reckoned upon her taking—and the dark became illumined by the moon, and the stars twinkled to see George still at his post. When the moon covered all things with her mystic light, George went in and dressed for dinner. Train still succeeded train on his list, racing madly with each other: she might arrive just before, or just at, or a little after the dinner-hour. Dinner was put back to await her, and they all sat—all save George, who hung about out of doors with an ear for every sound—all three

sat, dressed, hungry and silent, in the drawing-room.

'He'll get his shirt-front spoiled with the damp,' said Mrs Suffield; 'and those birds will be done to rags with waiting!'

Phemy laughed, and her mother frowned, and the mantel-clock struck half-past eight.

'Let's have dinner in, Joan,' said Suffield. 'She has very likely arranged to come by the dining-car express.'

'There are three of them on the different lines,' said his son, who had just entered, 'all within ten minutes of each other.'

So they went to dinner, and ate it with little gaiety or enjoyment.

'If she doesn't come by one of those three,' said George, striving to make up his mind to a definite conclusion, 'she won't come to-night.'

'Oh,' said his father. 'Then we can go to bed when we want to. She won't come till to-morrow now—if she come—and to-morrow's a bad day for travelling.—What did you say about coming when you wrote to her, lad?'

'I didn't expressly invite her,' answered George with a blush. 'I just asked her if she was coming.'

'Oh—in that case,' said his father, 'happen she doesn't mean to come—not that I mean to put you out of heart, my lad,' he added hurriedly; for George had turned very pale and had pulled his brows together. 'But, well—there you are, you know.'

'If she had not meant to come, she would have written that she was not coming,' said Mrs Suffield decisively.

'Don't let us discuss it, mother,' said George.

Isabel did not come; it was past eleven, and all were thinking gloomily of bed, when old Tummas, the butler—Daniel was gone for a holiday—entered with what he called a 'tally-graft': it had just been brought to the back-door by a special messenger. George tore it open. 'Am coming by night-train,' he read aloud; 'shall be with you early in the morning.—ISABEL.'

'The night-train!' exclaimed Mrs Suffield. 'It is not very seemly for a young lady to travel by night!'

'Oh, it's all right, mother,' said George cheerfully: and it was only now when it disappeared that the weight of his anxiety became apparent. 'Though you know well enough that when she wants to do a thing, Isabel is not the one to think whether it is seemly or not.—The trouble, however, is,' said he, with a laugh, 'that she doesn't say which night-train: there are three of them, as of the others!'

'Ah,' said his father, 'I've had quite an education to-day in trains: I had no idea that there was such a big, three-cornered competition, and that there could be so many people wanting to run up and down between this and London!'

George consulted his time-tables again, and took his resolution, and went out for a little to give an order to one of the grooms; and then they all went to bed.

At three o'clock on Christmas morning, in the dead, cold waste of what was still night, George Suffield stole softly away in a dogcart, like a midnight marauder. He had told no one his errand; and he drove on softly on the grass till

he thought he was out of ear-shot of the house, when he flicked his mare with the whip, saying, 'Now, my girl,' and dashed away out of the dark and down the high-road leading to town. He was going to meet Isabel. He would wait for first one night-train and then another until she came, until he saw her coming forth to greet him, 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.' In truth he trembled at the mere thought of meeting her alone—trembled, half with joy, wholly with expectation. Did she, or did she not, understand how he would interpret her coming? Did she quite understand?

The first train arrived at four o'clock at one station, laden with jovial passengers. But Isabel was not in that train. The next train arrived at a little past five at another station, and thither George leisurely drove to wait. Slowly, with leaden feet, the minutes and the quarters passed, but at length the engine glided into the station and ceased its motion with a great sigh. George singled out the Ladies' Sleeping Car, and just as he reached the door, Isabel stepped out upon the platform. Not many ladies could have borne the ordeal of being thus seen immediately at the end of a cold night journey; but Isabel could bear it better than most, and it was not the consciousness of being seen under untoward conditions that made her blush so deeply as she did.

'So, Bell,' said George, grasping her hand and embracing it with both his, 'you have come.'

'Yes, George,' said she; 'I have come.'

WHAT IS A BUCKET-SHOP?

AMONG the many 'notions' of dubious morality and more than dubious utility which we have imported from America, along with corners and watered stocks, is the Bucket-shop. This is a peculiarly American institution, which has only of late years found an abiding-place among us, and that not to any great extent outside of London. It may be that there are establishments on the Bucket-shop principle in Manchester, Liverpool, and Glasgow; but they have not the unblushing hardihood and heedless 'go' of the American and London establishments.

The term Bucket-shop is now primarily, if not exclusively, applied to an unlicensed and unauthorised office for gambling in stocks and shares. It is quite applicable, however, to any office for minor speculation in anything, conducted as an open gamble.

Indeed, the Bucket-shop is said to have originated in the grain-trade of Chicago, and one story of its origin is this. Some years ago, the Board of Trade—not a Government department, but in reality the Bourse, or Exchange—of Chicago laid down the regulation that the dealings in 'Options'—which have been already explained in this *Journal*—should not be for smaller quantities than five thousand bushels. This not only choked off the small speculators, but also seriously affected the business of those brokers and dealers who had cultivated clients of small means. To overcome this regulation, a sort of Petite Bourse, outside Exchange, or open Board of Trade, was started in a room under the regular Board of Trade room. For facility of intercourse,

a lift was by-and-by introduced; and in dull times a member of the larger room would offer to send down to the smaller room for a bucketful of small 'options' to keep things moving.

This is one explanation of how the term came to be applied to an office for small gambles in grain. We are not quite satisfied with it, however, and the term Bucket-shop was probably applied to the open Board of Trade by some singed moth or other. To 'bucket' is an old slang term for to 'cheat' or 'swindle.' It occurs in Vaux's 'Flash Dictionary' (1812), and is made use of by Sir Walter Scott in his *Diary* (1828), as if it were then a well-known phrase.

Then, again, to 'bucket' is to ride a horse recklessly; and in rowing, to 'bucket' is to turn the body forward too eagerly, preparatory to taking the stroke—another form of heedlessness. An old French word corrupted into 'bucket' gave name to a beam on which anything may be hung for carrying, such as a slaughtered sheep strung up by the heels. It is from this word that we have the slang phrase to 'kick the bucket;' and it is not extravagant to imagine some suggestion of the operation to the fertile mind which had invented the name of Bucket-shop. And finally, the word 'buck' is, according to Hotten's 'Slang Dictionary,' applied both to an unlicensed cabman and to a sixpence, from which an easy transition would make 'bucket' unlicensed dealing in small operations. From any one of these suggestions, a more reasonable theory of origin seems to us deducible, than from the somewhat strained story of the 'bucketful' of orders from the outside shop.

However originated, the term Bucket-shop is no longer confined to offices for small gambling in grain, but is applied to places in which a regular business is conducted, not for dealing in, but for betting on, stocks and shares. As a rule, the Bucket-shop keeper makes his own prices, approximating, of course, to those of the Exchange, so as to include what he calls his commission, and he makes them 'wide' enough to ensure his own safety, however the market goes. Bucket-shop dealing has been called thimble-rigging in stocks. This is, perhaps, too sweeping a definition, because, although the Bucket-shop is a foolish and improper institution, all Bucket-shop keepers are not deliberate swindlers. In fact, some of them are as straightforward and honest as the best class of bookmakers on races; but all the same, like the bookmakers, they flourish on the follies of the public; and like the keeper of a roulette table, they have all the odds in their favour. As in all gambling, there is both honesty and cheating in Bucket-shops; but in any case it is gambling pure and simple.

It is necessary to discriminate between speculation and gambling, and to get rid of the popular delusion that buying and selling on the Stock Exchange is not legitimate business. While we are not at present considering the ethics of speculation, we must ask the reader to remember that there is a wide difference between buying and selling a commodity or security 'for the rise' or 'for the fall,' and merely betting on the chances of a rise or a fall. The speculative buyer or seller must, if required, either take or deliver what he has bought or sold, and the transaction is regulated, recorded, and completed, as a regular

business transaction on recognised business principles. In the Stock Exchange, it is true that all the stocks and shares which are daily bought and sold do not daily change hands, but at the end of the 'account' pass from the last sellers to the last buyers, while the intermediaries settle their differences. Leaving these intricacies in the meantime, however, what we wish to make clear is that on the Stock Exchange definite commodities—that is, public securities—are dealt in, but in the Bucket-shops only *chances* are dealt in.

The frequenter of a Bucket-shop does not either buy or sell the stocks, nor does the keeper of it intend that he should. He simply bets on the rise or fall of a price, and in doing so deposits, or stipulates to pay, a 'margin,' which is just the same as tabling the stakes in a bet. The ultimate result of the operation depends more or less—but not more than the Bucket-shop keeper can help—on the movements of the stock markets, and thus the Bucket-shop is really an addendum to the Stock Exchange; or, as it was originally in Chicago, of the wheat-pit. But it is a parasite, an unsightly and unwholesome growth, which is abhorred by the legitimate dealer.

And one reason for his abhorrence is that the shocking reputation of Bucket-shops, and the evil experience of those who have resorted to them, have done a great deal to discredit legitimate dealing in properly constituted Exchanges. The idea is apt to prevail among persons of limited knowledge that, because the Bucket-shop is an office for gambling in stocks, all speculating in stocks is reckless gambling. Let it be clearly understood, therefore, that although the Bucket-shop hangs on to the Exchange and uses the quotations and terms of the Exchange, it is not a portion of, but is indignantly disowned by, the Exchange.

Another reason for the abhorrence of dealers is that whereas the members of the regular Stock Exchanges in this country are forbidden to advertise, the Bucket-shop keepers advertise far and wide, and attract into their parlours many an unwary fly who might otherwise have found his way to the legitimate avenues of the kind of business in which he was desirous of embarking.

We do not say, of course, that all stockbrokers who advertise are Bucket-shop keepers. There is no particular saving grace in membership, but only a certain assurance of respectability and honour. There are numbers of men known as 'outside brokers' quite as respectable and honourable as those within the magic circle, and who are only 'outside' because of some former misfortune or technical disability. To these 'outside brokers' it is quite open to advertise for business, which, moreover, they conclude within the precincts of the Exchange through a member with whom they arrange to divide their commissions.

A bonâ-fide 'outside broker' conducts bonâ-fide business in the same manner and on the same principles—except that he advertises—as a member of the Room. The Bucket-shop keeper, who also advertises, is not a broker, but a principal, like the croupier of the roulette table.

A broker is an agent whose interest is identical with that of his principal. A Bucket-shop

keeper's interest is exactly the reverse of that of his client.

Prices on the Stock Exchange are 'made' by the rivalries of buyers and sellers, the incidence of politics, the pressure of commercial events, the movements of gold, and so on. In London it is the function of the 'jobbers' to make prices for the brokers—a jobber acting only for himself, and a broker only for his clients. Now, when a jobber is asked by a broker to make a price for any given stock, he names two figures, say '55—55½'—which means that he will buy at the lower or sell at the higher figure, not knowing whether the broker be wishing to buy or sell. In the competition of business, prices, especially of favourite stocks, or those most extensively and frequently dealt in, are made very 'close'—that is, with a very small fraction indeed between the buying and the selling rate, the fraction representing the jobber's profit if he closes the transaction both ways at once, as he endeavours to do. These quotations are marked up, and are telegraphed all over the country; but the quotations fluctuate from hour to hour, and even from jobber to jobber.

The Bucket-shop keeper has either a tape-machine or messengers to bring him the prices in a constant stream from the Exchange, where he must have some confederate *sub rosa*. What he practically says to his clients is that the market must go up or down, and he advises them to select a stock, or he indicates a stock, in which the probabilities are one way or the other, and to wager a certain sum that it will go up or down to a certain extent. Suppose, for instance, Caledonian Railway Stock be selected for the gamble—the 'client' will bet ten pounds that 'Caleys' will go up above a certain named price. He deposits the ten pounds; and if the price falls one per cent.—we are assuming the extent of the operation being of the usual one thousand pounds nominal stock—the Bucket-man 'closes,' as he calls it, and pockets the money. Some of them charge a commission on the transaction, but for the most part they include their commission in the so-called prices. It will be observed that while the client may choose his own time, if he be on the spot, to close the bet should the price go in his favour, he has no option should it go against him, the 'deal' being ended the moment the margin is absorbed.

It is easy enough for a clever and unscrupulous Bucket-man so to manipulate quotations as always to secure the margins. Or even if prices do go against him, it is very simple to put another customer on the opposite tack, and make the one balance the other, to his own advantage.

As far as the 'client' is concerned, it is all pure guess-work and downright gambling. He does not go into the market to stand the chance of buying or selling in the light of his own knowledge and experience, and so by his own action to help to produce the result he expects and desires. He does not want the stock he 'bills,' nor has he the stock he 'bears.' He knows and cares nothing about its real value, and he has not the slightest desire even to see the article he is professing to deal in. He merely wagers money on the chances of what other people, of whom he has no knowledge, will do.

These Bucket-shops are swarming all over the United States, but are, happily, not so common with us. This is how an American writer describes the *modus operandi* in his country:

'The Bucket-shop keeper exhibits to his visitors the current quotations of some regularly conducted Exchange, and if the patron of the shop thinks that the members of the Exchange will buy enough (say) Western Union to advance the price, he deposits ten dollars with the cashier of the Bucket-shop, and "buys" ten shares of Western Union at (say) \$5 from its keeper, who stands ready either to buy or sell on the latest quotations from the patron. Here a margin of one per cent. is put up, and, unless otherwise stipulated, if the stock in the market on which they are betting goes down to 84½ or 84¼—depending on the "commission" charged—the patron's margin is exhausted and the game closed. Sometimes, if the standing of the patron is known, the Bucket-shop keeper will let the loss run against the customer a point or so more.'

This is a temptation to the gambler, who will let a loss run as long as the keeper will 'carry' him, which is just as far as the patron can be squeezed.

For the rest, says the same writer, these Bucket-shop keepers are 'Financial nomads, changing their firm-names and habitat to suit their pecuniary exigencies. They belong to no association, are accountable to no authority, and the sums they owe to confiding customers are usually too small to justify an appeal to law; besides, many patrons would not like to advertise their dealings.'

That is the pity of it. Men get bitten, but suffer in silence and shame. Every dealer in a Bucket-shop is, in sporting phrase, betting against the bank, and is bound to get caught sooner or later.

Is there no law against them? Apparently none, except the law of common-sense. If people would only consider the utter absurdity of the prospects held out by the Bucket-shop keeper—the weak folly of believing that if the chances of picking up fortunes are such as he professes, he would not pick them up for himself—the Bucket-shops would have fewer dupes. And yet their victims are legion, especially among the class of clerks and small shopkeepers, and even of 'retired persons' of limited means. Let a man figure in the proprietary of any joint-stock company, or in any way be known as an investor, and he will be flooded with the prospectuses and false promises of the Bucket-shops.

Who does not know these invitations to entrust limited amounts—the advertiser is always wary enough not to frighten his prey with big risks—to the unlimited discretion of a person they never heard of before in connection with a stock they know nothing whatever about—with the certainty of making a fabulous percentage of profit without getting out of bed? Well, we have known many who have been tempted, but we never knew one who came out finally unsinged. For the gambler has all the chances of the market and all the wiles and artifices of the Bucket-shop against him.

The worst of the Bucket-shop is that it preserves the appearance of orthodox business. It is often carried on in a sumptuous establishment,

with business waiting-rooms for clients, and ample supplies of telegraph information and daily newspapers. With the general air and bustle of such an establishment the novice is easily impressed, as we may be with the showy grandeur of Monte Carlo. But he is not more certain to lose his money at Monte Carlo than he is in a Bucket-shop.

Then how is it that Bucket-shop keepers do not always and rapidly make fortunes? How is it that they are so frequently disappearing from human ken, and if not too industriously pursued by the police, are reappearing with new names in some other part of the city, or in some other town? For the most part because they are mere adventurers to begin with, and if they make a 'pile,' either 'slide' with it, or else gamble with it themselves and 'get left'; then they leave their shop and its customers, and the landlord seizes the furniture.

How many hearts have been broken and homes made miserable by the Bucket-shops will never be known. Let the reader avoid them as he would the dragon's teeth.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

CHAPTER IV.—AN EBBING LIFE.

WHEN the boy's words fell upon Jessie's ear she swayed to and fro; the lantern dropped from her grasp, and she sank to the ground with a sense of utter helplessness. It seemed to her that the lantern was going out, and that they were whirling into darkness. But gradually her dizziness left her, the light came back to her eyes, and she recognised Jim bending over her with the flaring lantern close to her face.

'Miss Jess!' he was crying, in a panic-stricken voice, 'don't lie there. You'll be run over. Don't you hear something a-coming along the road? Get up—do get up!'

The tramp of horses could certainly be heard upon the hard road. Jess rose to her feet with Jim's assistance; and she had scarcely reached the side-path when two blurred lights were seen approaching through the mist.

'It's from the Hall,' said Jim. 'It's Colonel Woodward's carriage; shall I call out?'

'Yes.'

Jim waved the lantern and uttered a shrill cry. The carriage came to a stand-still, and a gentleman stepped out. 'Colonel Woodward!'

He was a strongly-built man of forty or forty-five. He had a kindly face; and as he held out his hand to Jess, spoke in a deep earnest voice. 'I was on my way to the cottage,' said he. 'We want your help, Miss Bryce. We are in great trouble at the Hall. A young fellow has been struck down in Thurrock Wood. He's not dead; but I fear he's dying. Everything is being done, however, to save his life. We only need a trained nurse. Will you come?'

Jess answered eagerly: 'I will go with you now!' She spoke a hurried word to Jim, exchanging with him a meaning look, and then stepped into the carriage. Colonel Woodward took the place at her side, and they drove back to Thurrock Hall as quickly as it was possible on such a night.

Jess almost dreaded to speak as they went along, lest her voice should betray her intense agitation. In one moment the whole outlook had been changed. He was dying! Had she waited these three years, and hoped against hope, only for this? How strange that Woodward should have come for her! She could no longer resist the question: 'Who is he?'

'Nobody knows,' said Woodward; 'and nothing has been found to identify him. He has not been robbed. A leathern case containing some bank-notes was found in a side-pocket. The whole thing is a mystery.—What can have prompted the crime?'

A dreadful thought occurred to Jess. 'Is it not possible,' said she, 'that the blow was self-inflicted?'

'The doctor thinks not,' said Woodward. 'It is one of the most incomprehensible attempts at murder, he declares, that he has ever heard of.'

Jess sank back in the carriage. She wondered who could have done so cruel a deed? It seemed to her that John Upcraft was surrounded by enemies. And yet she knew, for her own heart told her so, that John had never done any one an intentional wrong.

A lengthy drive through the dark, leafless avenue brought them to the principal entrance to Thurrock Hall, with its lofty portico, reached by a broad flight of steps. What a contrast this mansion was, compared with the six-roomed cottage down in the marshlands! The great hall, with its oaken staircase beyond; the library, the suite of reception rooms, the long picture-gallery above. Every room was well known to Jess; for she had been a frequent visitor at the Hall for years past.

The Colonel led the way up-stairs.

The injured man was lying upon a bed in one of the spare rooms, quite motionless. Jess approached the bedside and looked into his face. Three years had greatly changed him. She could scarcely believe that this was the John Upcraft she had known in better days. There were lines of care that told how deeply he had suffered. For a moment she thought him dead: he was livid, and hardly seemed to breathe. The colour went from her face while she looked. Woodward was standing at her side, watching her every movement, seemingly with more concern for her than for the patient.

'Are you faint?' said he.

'It's nothing,' said Jess. 'I'—

He hastened to reach a chair for her, and she sank down with a sense of hopelessness and despair, which she could hide no longer.

Woodward went in search of his sister; and presently Miss Woodward came in with some tea. She was not unlike her brother, though graver in look. She had lived many years at Thurrock Hall; and since her brother had retired from the army, she had kept house for him here. Something in her look and tone, at times, had made Jess wonder if she had ever experienced a great sorrow. It seemed to her as though some painful romance had cast a shadow over Miss Woodward's life in days gone by, and had left its traces upon her face.

'Shall I sit with him to-night?' said she, looking sympathetically at Jess. 'You look so tired.'

No suggestion could have roused Jess more thoroughly out of herself. 'Indeed, I'm not,' said she; 'I'm quite rested now!'

When the household at Thurrock Hall had retired, and Jess found herself alone at the bedside, she bent down over her patient with a great joy at her heart. She was near him once more. There he lay, between life and death; no look of recognition in his half-closed eyes, no word upon his lips, no utterance even of her name. But she was near him; that was some recompense after all these years; and a sense of gratitude, so long unknown to her, filled her whole being; and she found relief in tears at last.

He had constant medical care: the days went by; but without any promise of recovery. And now a new dread took a hold upon her. He would be recognised! How could that fatality be averted? She racked her brains in search of some loophole for escape from an avowal that she was nursing the man she loved—a hunted convict—and that his name was John Upercraft.

One thing, however, afforded Jess a great sense of relief during these anxious days. Her father, though he had returned from his unpremeditated visit to London, had kept away from Thurrock Hall. She knew that he had an almost morbid horror of being asked to give medical advice since he had gone into retreat. But was that sufficient to account for his apparent absence of all interest or sympathy concerning this trouble which had fallen upon the shoulders of his warm-hearted neighbour? But she offered no comment, even to Woodward. Her father's name, indeed, never escaped her; for she fully realised that the moment he entered the sick-room the secret, which she was scheming every hour in the day to preserve, would be blurted out. Her one hope was that Upercraft would regain strength enough to quit the Hall before her father showed the least sign of making his appearance.

At last Upercraft began to give some indications of recovery; and one night, when Jess was alone beside him, he recognised her for the first time. She was drowsy from many hours of vigil when she heard him murmuring her name: 'Jess!'

She went to the bedside and bent over him: 'Dear John! Do you know me?'

He moved his head feverishly from one side to the other. 'I wish that boy would take the lantern away,' said he. 'It blinds me. Will you help me up? I can walk now. What a shivering fit I've got from lying here so long! No; don't put your cloak over me. I shall soon get warm. Is that the light in the cottage window? Help me up! There's the gun firing again.'

She took his hand and spoke a soothing word in his ear. For a while he lay silent, looking towards the cheerful fire, the only light in the room, except a little hand-lamp which Jess had placed out of sight. 'How bright and warm it is,' he presently went on in a changed tone. 'When I've washed this mud off my face and hands'—He raised his eyes to Jessie's face while speaking; and then a look of recognition gradually came into his face. 'Jess—am I dreaming?'

'No, dear; you are awake now.'

'Am I?' said he, looking about him doubtingly.

'Why, this is not the cottage! If I am awake, tell me how I come to be lying here?'

'This is Thurrock Hall,' said Jess, 'and you have been ill—very ill.'

Then she told him in a few words what had happened. When she had finished, he lay for a long time silent and thoughtful. Then he said, as if questioning himself rather than Jess: 'Who has done this?'

'It's not known,' said the girl; 'but Colonel Woodward, who is an active magistrate, is making a thorough investigation.'

Presently Upercraft fell into a sound sleep. Jess took a seat by the fire; but she no longer felt drowsy. She began to wonder whether John would approve of her action in keeping his identity concealed from her friends at Thurrock Hall. Her father, as she still dreaded, might walk into the sick-room at any moment. She resolved to speak of this to John as soon as he was strong enough, and be guided by his decision.

When Upercraft awoke an hour or two later, he looked eagerly at Jess, and said: 'Give me time—a day or two—and it will all come back to me!'

'Of what are you speaking, John?'

'All that happened in Thurrock Wood,' said he. 'I was dreaming about it just now. It was bitterly cold that night, and the footpath was frozen hard. I heard a step coming up behind me a long way off. I thought I recognised it. Whose could it have been? I can't remember! But I remember turning with his name on the tip of my tongue, when I was struck down. That blow has blotted out the name!' He again fell into a thoughtful mood. At last he said: 'If I were to hear the footstep, hear it only once, the name would come back to me. I wonder, shall I ever hear it again?'

Jess made no reply. She was intensely interested in all he was saying; but she feared to encourage any talk; and after a while he fell asleep once more, and did not wake till day-break.

One afternoon, a few days later, Miss Woodward—almost as conscientious a nurse in the sick-room as Jess herself—came in to relieve her for a while. Colonel Woodward appeared a moment after her. 'Come, Miss Bryce,' said he, 'let us go for a brisk walk across the home park; what do you say?'

'I am always ready for a brisk walk,' said Jess, with a sense of her old sprightliness coming back now that Upercraft was out of danger. If Woodward had asked her to dance with him down the avenue, she would have hardly refused.

At first, their walk was brisk enough, even for Jess. They both felt a healthful glow as they went along in the face of a keen north wind. But after a while, turning into a pathway under an avenue of elms, they began to slacken their pace, for Jess was getting out of breath. Her lips were slightly parted, and her cheeks had gained quite a rosy hue.

Woodward bent his eyes earnestly upon her face. 'I have often wished,' said he, 'that I could see you looking more cheerful; and you begin to look so to-day—more yourself! I know

how you have suffered. I learned about your trouble long ago; and I have felt so sorry for you.—Do I pain you? I want you to think of me as your friend.

She had long known that Woodward cared for her far more than she could have desired. She knew also, only too well, that her father had never ceased to do his best to bring about a match between them. But since Woodward was some years her senior, and knew of her engagement to Upcraft, she hoped that in time his untold love might turn to friendship. She had always felt a great affection for him. He had been a true friend to her and to her father for many years; and the thought of shunning him had never entered her head. But she almost wished that she had done so now; for she had no desire except for his happiness. She could realise, as she had never been able to realise before, what a hopeless passion must be, and her sympathy was seriously awakened. She was too deeply moved to speak; she could only thank him with a look of gratitude: she felt what avowal must follow such condoling words!

The afternoon had become overcast. An occasional snow-flake sifted through the black branches of the elm-trees over their heads. They had turned their steps towards home before Woodward resumed: 'I should be the last to ask you,' said he, 'to put this trouble out of your thoughts. That I know would be impossible. But if you will give me the right to share your thoughts with you, Jess, I will do my best to bring at least a gleam of happiness into your life.'

He saw a feathery flake touch a ringlet of her dark hair; another alighted on her lashes as if it were a frosty tear. And then the snow began to fall in earnest, and they hastened on their way. The white flakes whirled about them in blinding clouds, looking like flakes of soot against the stormy sky.

'It cannot—it can never be!'

Jess was sorely troubled. She now conceived how wrongly she had acted in keeping the knowledge of John's identity a dead secret. What would Colonel Woodward think of her when he learned the truth? She never imagined that she could be placed by one thoughtless deed in so distasteful a position. She could find no excuse that would fully justify her lack of moral courage to confide in him. It seemed to her at that moment as though she had questioned his honour. Would it not seem so to him?

The snow-flakes danced about them in the wind, looking like a swarm of pale, mischievous sprites that took delight in her discomfiture. She stopped and glanced up distressfully into Woodward's face. 'Oh, can't you understand?' said she, in a bewildered tone. 'I could not bring myself to speak of it, not even to you! For I had the horrible dread that it might reach my father's ears. It was this that prompted me to guard the secret. Try not to think ill of me. I've hardly been in my right senses, I fear, since all this happened. My one thought was to get him well, and away! And then I would have asked your forgiveness for my foolish mistrust of your sister and you.'

The playful snow-flakes rushed round them in maddening flights. Woodward leaned his back against the trunk of a great elm and regarded

Jessie distractedly, as though puzzled to decide whether she was in her right senses yet.

'The man whom you found nearly murdered in Thurrock Wood,' Jess went on, 'whom you brought to the Hall in your carriage—to whom you gave your hospitality, and have tended ever since like a friend—is none other than an escaped convict—the man I have loved for years—and his name is John Upcraft!'

The eager flakes caught up her words and fled with them, as if racing to be first to carry her secret to the four winds.

Woodward spoke no word. He silently gave Jess his arm, and they struggled on together in the face of the snow-storm towards the Hall.

They had ascended the terrace steps, and were crossing the terrace on their way to the front door, when Jess chanced to peer in at one of the library windows. On the hearth-rug in front of a bright fire stood her father. He was warming his hands at the blaze; and he smiled at them blandly over his shoulder as they hurried by.

Jess pressed more closely to Woodward's side; her fingers tightened upon his arm; and she turned as white as the snow-flakes that were beating against their faces. 'You'll not let my father see him, will you?' said she. There was terror in her look.

Woodward hastened to reassure her. 'But come to the library,' said he. 'Show yourself for a moment. You may then safely leave him to me.'

She followed Woodward tremulously. Her father was still standing over the fire and warming his hands, when they entered the room. 'Well,' said he, 'caught in the snow-storm, were you? So was I. It will be the death of me. I shall have to ask you to put me up to-night, Woodward. I dare not venture out again in this weather.'

Woodward turned away to hide his look of annoyance. 'You're always welcome, of course,' said he.

'So the patient is recovering, eh?' Mr Bryce went on, glancing at Jess. 'Miss Woodward can spare you now, can't she?'

'Not yet,' Woodward chimed in. 'The patient is out of danger; but we sha'n't be able to spare Jess for some days.'

Mr Bryce looked frowningly into the fire. 'Out of danger, is he?—Now, I wonder,' said he, in a slow, deliberate tone, 'I wonder if he has expressed any opinion—whether, in a word, he has been able to throw any light upon this mystery. It would be interesting to know'—

'He remembers nothing,' Jess interposed, 'except a step behind him—then the dreadful blow—nothing more.'

'Ah!' Mr Bryce nodded at the fire, and rubbed his hands cheerfully together. But he made no comment beyond this exclamation.

Jess gave Woodward a quick glance and went out. She found Miss Woodward seated at the bedside when she reached the sick-room. Upcraft had fallen asleep. 'My dear,' said Miss Woodward, looking anxiously into Jessie's face, 'you won't think me too curious, will you? But do tell me! Has he spoken to you? He told me he should speak to you to-day.—But you can't cast your love for that other one,' she hastened to

add—'the one you have lost—out of your heart, can you?'

Jessie shook her head. 'I have much to tell you,' said she.

'Ah! I was afraid,' Miss Woodward went on—'I was afraid it would prove to you a livelong grief! I pity you. Yes, only as a woman can pity, my dear, who has gone through all the misery herself.'

Miss Woodward had scarcely gone, when Upercraft opened his eyes. He raised himself and listened intently.

'What is it, dear?' said Jess.

'I've been dreaming again about that footstep in Thurrock Wood,' said he, with the listening look still in his eyes. 'Whose step can it have been?'

Upercraft lay awake, puzzling over this question. It was long past midnight; the household was hushed in sleep, and no sound reached him except an occasional gust of wind, or the soft pattering of the snow against the windows. The fire burned brightly in the darkened room, throwing weird shadows like threatening arms upon the walls. Jess had fallen asleep in a chair at the bedside, with an arm resting upon the bed, and her head resting upon her arm.

He had closed his eyes, half-dozing at last, when an approaching step in the corridor outside caught his ear. During some moments, Upercraft thought that he must be dreaming again; for the step exactly resembled the one he had heard in Thurrock Wood. He raised himself upon his elbow and cast a swift glance at Jess, to discover if the step had awakened her. No; she was sleeping soundly enough. He was half tempted to rouse her; the step might be a delusion—the lingering echo of the dream he had had a few hours ago. But he refrained; for each moment the step seemed to draw nearer; and then the name of him to whom the step belonged flashed upon his memory—the very blow that had fallen upon him seemed to repeat itself—and he sank back stupefied upon his pillow.

SOME LITERARY AMENITIES.

LITERATURE is a hobby that affords a varied round of pleasures. Besides those of reading, writing, thinking, critical gossip, and the genialities of your club gatherings, if you are so happy as to be a member of any such intellectual society, there is the exercise of your physical man in excursions among the bookshops and stalls. A lover of books will, unawares, tramp miles and go through quite a long course of calisthenics in a second-hand shop no larger than a boudoir, as he wanders to and fro scanning the shelves, ever and anon pulling down a volume and replacing it; to say nothing of his numerous scrambles up the shop-ladder in search of hid treasure. Then, too, the deeply interesting little chats on book-lore with the quaintly philosophical bookseller—whose favourite work is perhaps Boswell's 'Johnson,' which he knows by heart—are interspersed with the vagaries of all sorts and conditions of callers, from the Irish labourer who has mistaken the place for the Post-office half

a mile away, to the callow youth who, to our surprise, instead of asking for a sixpenny 'Robinson Crusoe' or a threepenny 'Midshipman Easy,' asks about the result of the afternoon's football match, seemingly under the impression that a man surrounded by so many books must assuredly be omniscient.

One caller, a well-dressed lady, who one evening drove up in a carriage, created quite a sensation by asking for 'Don Quixote, by Charles Dickens.'

'I beg your pardon, madam,' said the bookseller cautiously, 'did you say "Dombey and Son"?'

'Oh no! Don Quixote!' she emphatically replied.

'I have a beautiful copy of a work of that name by Cervantes,' he said, showing her the volume.

After turning over its pages awhile in doubt, she murmured: 'I'm afraid this will not do for me. I want the one by Charles Dickens to complete a set!'

A curious example of generous obstinacy was a stout countryman who inquired for a nice book to read—'one with a story in.' On several being placed before him, he examined them attentively, and picked out the middle volume of a 'three-decker' with the remark, 'This 'ere's my sort. What's the price?'

'Oh,' was the reply, 'this is only the second volume; the story goes through three—the set is half-a-crown.'

'Hauve-a-crown! Well; I'll gie ye that for that one book. It's a pretty un enough.'

'But won't you have the other two as well? You'd better!'

'Naw! I don't like th' beginnin' of a story; I can't get forrard wi' it. An' I don't like th' endin'; I don't know as 'ow it's comed about. But in th' middle un I'm into t' thick of it right off. No; I'll only tak' th' middle un; it'll set me up for a month.' And cramming the book into his pocket, he put down his half-crown and disappeared with a 'Good-night!' before the other volumes could be given to him.

Another was a tatterdemalion strongly reminiscent of Quilp. He was not quite so hideous; but what he lacked in that was counterbalanced by rags, dirt, and odour. He arrived in a flat donkey-cart, and, sneaking into the shop with a big empty sack in his hand, he inquired in a nasal treble: 'Anythin' in my line to-day, Mister? I can do with a sackful.'

'No,' answered that gentleman sternly, without looking up from his cataloguing; 'I never have anything in your line, and never shall. You haven't paid me for that last lot of books.'

'Aven't paid ye!' he squeaked in simulated astonishment. 'S'elp me! 'Ave ye 'ad yer letter-box broke open lately? 'Cos that's why yer never got that there cheque as I sent ye!'

'Cheque!' exclaimed the bookseller, still writing. 'You haven't any money in your pocket: never mind the bank.'

'No money in my pocket, eh? 'Aven't I, though, eh? Jus' you wait! Oh, no!—no money!' With these exclamations, he dropped his sack, and diving here and there into his rags—it was a wonder he found the way to a pocket among so many holes—he fished up a dirty, bulky cash-bag, which jingled very suggestively while he was untying the string. The bookseller looked up in astonishment, then he burst into a roar of laughter as the contents of the bag were turned out on a sheet of music: rusty keys, penknife blades, divorced scissors, clock-wheels, nails, screws, and tacks—among which Quilp Secundus fumbled till he found something which he put into his mouth to clean, and then triumphantly slapped on the palm of his left hand. 'No money, eh? Look there!' The purchase-money for a sackful of books was a threepenny piece!

No trade was done; and Quilp muttered as he went out: 'When man can't trust his brother-man, commerce is a-goin' to the dogs.'

An entirely different character was a worn, elderly-looking man, who, one Tuesday night, came into a bookshop asking for help. The bookseller, who seemed to know him, offered him, out of a stock of three hundred or so, a dozen shilling pamphlets—speeches of John Bright, marked for sale in the window at threepence each—to sell in the street at any price he liked, provided that when he had sold the dozen he was to buy any more he wanted at a reduced rate. In five minutes he was back to pay his halfpence, and take away two dozen. A longer interval elapsed before he returned to invest his earnings in more. So he went on for the rest of the evening and throughout the week, till on Friday, looking much younger—the effect of better living—he bought the remaining stock; and on Saturday he presented himself to the bookseller to say that he had saved three pounds, and was going to set up an apple-cart on Monday. This he did; and when we saw him last, judging by the sound of his voice, and the patronage of the office boys whose pennies will buy them more dessert than dinner, he seemed to be doing a roaring business.

Booksellers' catalogues are perennial springs of pleasure to the book-lover, who often is unable to part with a single one, but hoards them up like a miser. He goes most carefully through each one as it comes in, marking off all the books that he would like, without regarding their heavy prices or the lightness of his purse; and when he has added up the total amount and found how little of it he can afford, he sighs, and consoles himself with the reflection that most of them he can live without. The sole consolation of one such bibliophile was to become the possessor of the books he had ticked off. He had, however, money to spend, and was uneasy till he had spent it. When the books arrived, he occupied hours in skimming their contents and placing them on his shelves. Some of these he gradually discovered were not literature; and being proud of his library as a collection of works of high literary and artistic merit, he—more cautious than Gilad P. Beck, who made a bonfire of his Browning—as gradually weeded them out, and placed them side by side with other books of like calibre in a special corner

in his attic. This became a penance chamber; for, when, as occasionally happened, he was in a pessimistic mood, he invariably visited it, sat down in the midst of these 'books that were not books,' and, considering them as the causes of wasted time and pence, solemnly objurgated them.

Catalogues, too, are happy hunting-grounds for unintentional humour, which arises sometimes from the printer's errors, sometimes from incongruities of arrangement and expression. A sample of a combination of both occurs in the titles, 'The Art of Dying; back gone;' and 'Eastlake's Lady, old and ragged.' The printer alone seems to be responsible for such as 'A Theory of Immorality;' and 'Drew's Essay on Soles' is more suggestive of ichthyology than theology. The substitution of a small *i* for a capital humorously suggests the obtrusion of a celebrated Norwegian novelist, 'Bjornson in God's Way;' whilst by the insertion of a comma in the wrong place, 'Jerusalem, delivered in prose,' we might imagine that the Crusades were wars of words not weapons.

The habit frequently adopted by booksellers of using the possessive case of a writer's name followed by the title of his work leads sometimes to curious effects. For instance, 'Berkley's Wealth and Welfare;' 'Lalor's Money and Morals;' 'Turner's Wish and Will;' 'Ellis's Temper and Temperament;' and 'Wynter's Subtle Brains and Lissom Fingers,' suggestive of the Artful Dodger's profession. Occasionally, the bookseller himself deviates into humour, as in the two following instances: 'King's Interest Tables, a rather poor copy, and very poor price;' 'Poems by James Gay, with a portrait of the Great Man, who modestly calls himself Poet Laureate of Canada and Master of all Poets. Notwithstanding these high claims I sell his poems for 4d.'

One gratifying effect of free lectures for the poor is the greater frequency of the demand among them, both at the free libraries and shops, for books which they hear mentioned or quoted, and feel desirous of reading. There is something pathetic and hopeful in the accidental humour of the book titles they jot down as aids to memory; the humour of inadequate knowledge brought to the assistance of the crewhile unknown. From such lists we cull these examples: 'The Works of Mac Sadler' (Max Adeler); 'The Quinsey's Opium-eater;' 'Jane Hair;' 'The Middle Ages of Alum' (Hallam); 'Story of Andrew Mackay' (Andromache); 'Maud Arthur' (Morte d'Arthur); 'Shoppinghour' (Schopenhauer); 'Lamb's Asses of Elias;' 'Carlyle's French Revelation;' 'Dictionary of Verbal Words;' 'The Decline of Gibbon.' In view of demands for books like these, one naturally thinks of two anomalies that are not, unfortunately, happy enough for amenities: Ruskin's endeavour to educate the labourers and workmen of Great Britain, and the unreason of the reasoner Schopenhauer. It is a satire on Ruskin's theory that those very labourers, for the volumes of letters addressed specially to them, must pay the prohibitive price of four pounds, while they can purchase a handsome Shakespeare for three shillings, and become the possessor of a classic like Carlyle's 'French Revolution' for half that

amount. As for Schopenhauer, he declaimed against reading, but waxed irritable when the public, taking him at his word, did not buy his books.

A BOAT-SERVICE ADVENTURE.

RATHER more than three years ago I was serving as sub-lieutenant on board H.M.S. —, at that time engaged, with the rest of the British and German men-of-war in those waters, in the blockade of the East Coast of Africa. This blockade was the result of a sort of compromise. The British wished—as they have always wished—to put down the slave-trade, and the Germans to prevent the sale of arms to the native inhabitants of their new colonies. So the two admirals arranged to join forces, and declared a joint blockade of all vessels trading in arms or slaves. Of course, there were other niceties in the agreement; but that was the gist of it.

To carry out the blockade effectually, each ship was allotted a station, for which she became responsible. H.M.S. — was ordered to take charge of the island of Pemba, which, although not, properly speaking, a part of the coast, or even fringing it—there being a channel of half a day's run between them—had nevertheless been included in the blockade. Pemba is the first or northernmost of the three Arab islands, Pemba, Zanzibar, and Mafia, and was then under the rule of the Sultan of Zanzibar; but this rule was far more nominal than real; practically, it was parcelled out among rich Arab families, the heads of which were almost independent chiefs, or perhaps it would be more correct to say, independent merchant-princes, for, taking into consideration that Pemba has so far had no European capital or European enterprise to help it, its commerce is very creditable, and is all in the hands of these feudal Arabs, who own not only plantations—cloves, sugar, &c.—but mercantile fleets to transport their produce. And—and it is here that there is a certain 'coolness' between these gentry and the British naval authorities—these ships are apt to return from their trading voyages laden with slaves for their owners' plantations.

The most remarkable feature in the geography of Pemba is its deeply indented coast-line, which is simply studded with natural harbours, with here and there an arm of the sea stretching so far inland as almost to divide the whole island—something like the Scottish firths, only more irregular. Add to this that it is fringed with reefs and sandbanks, sometimes extending many miles out to sea, and you will understand that H.M.S. — had plenty of work to do, and that most of it had to be done in boats.

I was given command of the steam-cutter, and ordered to hold myself responsible for a large bight rejoicing in the jaw-breaking appellation of Kegomacha Bay. Here I was left with my crew of six and an interpreter, making with myself eight all told. We left the ship with provisions and coal for five days; but as it was quite out of the question to keep all that coal in the boat, we made a *cache* of most of it, and hoped that it might remain unstolen; if not, well, we must cut wood.

My next care was to have things put square

and shipshape in the boat; spirit-breaker and ammunition boxes aft, other large stores under the thwarts, and small articles in the lockers. Then, having had a regular clear up, we made tea, after which I inspected the arms and served out ammunition. By this time it was nearly five o'clock; so, as I wished to get well into the offing by nightfall, I ordered the anchor to be weighed, and stood out to sea.

My reason for doing this was as follows: The Arabs are very good navigators; but even the best navigators, when making a reef-bound and unlighted shore, like to verify their position by getting a good look at the landmarks during daylight. When a vessel is liable to be chased, this is all the more necessary, as she cannot afford to go pottering about among shoals, trying her nose first at one point and then at another, but must dash right through the darkness to her own particular little harbour, and to dash with any confidence, requires an exact knowledge of one's whereabouts and of the bearing of the point to be dashed at. It has thus become customary for the captain of a slave dhow so to regulate his voyage as to be just in sight of land at sunset; the nearer he can manage this the better for him: to be too soon, means showing himself longer than he cares about in what he probably calls 'the dangerous-in-daylight zone'; to be too late means that he does not get a clear view of the land. Relying on this, I argued that a small boat like mine, with no sail hoisted, and steaming easy so as to avoid making smoke, by arranging on her part to be at about the same distance from the shore at the same time, or perhaps a few minutes later, might, with the binoculars, have a very good chance of sighting one of these gentlemen just as he was bearing up for harbour. This was my plan; and you may be sure that I searched the horizon very carefully as the sun went down, and the short twilight of ten minutes or so that there is in those parts gradually merged itself into the dark.

At last I was rewarded; looming up on our starboard bow was something large and black; soon it began to assume definite shape, that of a triangle: it was a dhow's lateen-sail. Unfortunately, just at that moment the stoker, who ought to have known better, opened the furnace door, letting the glare light up both himself and the bowman: almost simultaneously, the dhow put her helm down and headed away for the eastern extremity of the bay.

'Full speed!' I shouted, at the same time catching up a rifle and sending a bullet through her sail as a summons to heave to. Strictly speaking, I ought to have first tried her by firing a blank cartridge; but, under the circumstances, I dispensed with that formality. Of our summons she vouchsafed, as I had expected, not the smallest notice; so we settled down to the chase. Some ten minutes had elapsed, when the cockswain remarked to me that the water seemed to be growing very shallow. A sounding, taken with the boat-hook staff, showed him to be right; there was barely a foot of water under our keel. Now, I knew that somewhere hereabouts there was a large sandbank, with occasional patches of very shallow water indeed on it; and it occurred to me that the dhow must have altered course as she did with the object of bringing us across

one of these. Lest it be thought singular that a native Arab dhow should have better hydrographic information than a boat belonging to one of Her Majesty's ships, I may say at once that not only is all this part very roughly charted, but that even the best chart could hardly be expected to give all the little boat-channels that criss-cross a large reef or sandbank; whereas a dhow belonging to the neighbourhood would have her own private marks for every rock and every pool. Had it been a dhow from any other part of the island, she would have known a great deal less than we did; but it being our first day, we had not had time to make our own observations, and this particular dhow had the advantage of us.

However, to have done anything but keep straight on now would have been to make certain of losing her. While I was reflecting on these things, and wondering whether so small a boat as we were might not escape grounding, I got a most unmistakable answer; namely, a prolonged scraping noise under the keel. For fifty yards, perhaps, we struggled on, churning up the sand with our screw, then came to a full stop.

On this I gave the order, 'Stop the engines; all hands overboard,' setting the example myself. Relieved of our weight, the little cutter floated again, and, four a side, we walked her along by the gunwale until once more she brought up with a bump.

'I see what's the matter, sir,' said the cockswain, who was stooping down at the bows; 'there's a boulder right under her forefoot: launch her back a fathom.' This we did, and then, altering the direction of her head, got her forward again through a distance of perhaps twice her own length. Here luck was once more against us: the water shoaled to about two feet. I suppose that the chase must have heard our not too mild expressions of disgust at this new check, for out of the night came various guttural sounds, the English equivalents of which would probably have been something like: 'Hope you're comfortable; sure you don't want a tow?' and so on. This was too much. We shoved, and we pushed, and scraped the sand away from the bows, and finally I told the leading stoker to lean over and set the engines going. Then at last she began to move. The word 'Stop!' was just on my lips, when, before we knew where we were, the boat gave a sort of slither forward, and—souse! we were all under water. She had been on the edge of a steep bank, and had slid off.

In a few seconds we were all up again, spluttering and laughing, and fortunately untouched by the screw; but where was the cutter? Here was something that Mark Tapley himself would have found it hard to laugh at. Being under steam, she had gone on by herself. In fact, I fancied that I could just discern her outline away out to seaward.

Our position was most serious. Our foothold, such as it was, would be lost when the tide came up, and there being a strong northerly current, we should infallibly be swept out to sea. Even supposing that one or two of the strongest of us managed to reach the shore by swimming, what sort of a fate would be theirs at the hand of people who, only a few months before, had mur-

dered a whole boat's crew, and were now smarting from the indemnity that they had been forced to pay for their crime? And this supposition made no account of sharks, which, although not so bad as in some parts, were yet quite sufficiently numerous to constitute a danger.

Every minute that passed, the boat was steaming away; yet what was to be done? In this dilemma I called the two petty officers, the cockswain and the leading stoker, to a council of war. Imprimis, we were all agreed that to swim *after* her and try to catch her that way would be mere foolishness, and wasting our strength to no purpose. Now there came to my mind a certain conversation that I had once had with a very scientific officer anent what are called 'turning circles.' A ship's handiness is said to be measured by the diameter—that is, the smallness of the diameter—of her 'turning circle' with different degrees of helm. This is fairly clear. It does not want an expert to understand that a vessel under steam with her rudder kept over at the same angle will, if there be no tide or current, ultimately come back by a circular course to the point at which she started. What, however, is not so well known is that a screw steamer even without any helm at all will do this. But she will take a very long time about it. The reason is that a screw steamer left to herself never goes quite straight ahead; to make her go straight ahead requires a little helm. Hence, leaving her entirely alone comes to the same thing as giving a little helm to a paddle steamer. The officer in question had been making experiments in a piece of ornamental water with model screw steamers, and had been trying to see what kind of screw caused least deviation from a straight course; and he said that he was surprised to find how exactly all his models came back to the very spot where they had started from. 'In fact, my dear fellow,' he had said, 'a screw steamer is nothing more nor less than a very cumbersome sort of boomerang.'

But, oh dear, what poor encouragement were those ornamental-water experiments to us, standing on a little knoll of sand, miles from the shore, with blackness all round us, a rising tide, and eddies and currents swirling this way and that, sufficiently to render nice mathematical certainties very uncertain indeed. No; we must have something more to go on than the action of the screw as a turning agent, to hope that our little boat was coming back to us. Strangely—and fortunately—there *was* something else. The cockswain was in favour of swimming after the boat, not thinking that we could catch her at once, but that, after ten minutes or so, she might begin to slow down of herself. I knew better than that, and so of course did the leading stoker; besides, I pointed out to him, she was out of sight, and it was very unlikely that we should be able to make a correct guess at her course. Finding himself outvoted, he urged that, after all, she was half crippled by the bowman's tarpaulin hanging over the port side.

'The bowman's tarpaulin hanging over the port side!' I repeated, with hope beginning to dawn. 'Are you certain?'

'Quite, sir. I made a grab at it to save myself going under water, and the whole thing came overboard.'

'But it's fast to the boat?'

'Oh yes, sir; it's made fast right enough; but it's dragging through the water, and that's enough to stop a little boat like'—

'Stop her, with that head of steam on!—not a bit of it,' I replied. 'But it'll do better—it'll turn her.'

I don't think that the men were very sanguine; but that I could not help. If there was a heavy tarpaulin hanging over one side of the boat, she was bound to keep turning towards that side. The only other thing that could influence her course was the current, and this, in the main—for it would be hopeless to attempt to go into the various eddies—set towards the north. Therefore, the boat would come round to a point due north of us. How far north, and how long before she got there, depended upon how much tarpaulin was hanging over the side, and of course could only be guessed at. At any rate there was no time to be lost.

I called for four hands to strip, and did the same myself. While we were stripping, I made the men take their knife lanyards and knot them all together. To these I added some twice-laid rope, of which the cockswain carried a coil in his monkey-jacket pocket; my own *kammarband*, which, for the information of those readers who have not been in India or the East, I may describe as a kind of long sash; also the interpreter's: altogether this gave a pretty long rope. What I intended doing with it, you will see later.

When every one was ready, I gave the men their orders. First of all, I made them observe the constellation of the Southern Cross. This, I explained to them, they were to keep straight behind them, so that they could be certain that they were swimming due north—that is, straight out to sea. We would all start together. After fifty strokes, one man would stop and tread water; after another twenty-five strokes, another man; and so on until we were all posted at intervals of twenty-five strokes, the inmost man being fifty strokes from the knoll, and myself being the farthest out. You see, I reckoned on the tide having set her out something between fifty and a hundred and fifty strokes—rough reckoning, but the best I could do. Finally, I cautioned the men to try and scramble on board by the tarpaulin, as by so doing they would avoid the risk of being wounded by the propeller. The rope I kept myself.

I don't think that there is much fear of my ever forgetting that swim out into the waste of black sea. There was nothing really dangerous about it bar the sharks, and the sharks would have been almost as dangerous on our little sand-knoll, where the danger would have come, had we been unsuccessful, after we got back to the others and found the tide begin to rise. Yet the sense of loneliness, increasing as one by one the men came to their allotted stations and were left behind treading water, was something terrible.

At last I had come to my post. How I wished there was a moon! Until then, I don't think that I had ever realised how terribly contracted is the horizon of a man whose eyes are only a few inches above the sea: he can hardly see any distance. At the end of three minutes

or so I seemed to hear something; what it was I could not say; nevertheless, I instinctively swam a few strokes in the direction from which the sound seemed to come. Then I listened again. Yes, it was there, and plainer. Whether it were the cutter or not, it was something; and should it turn out to be two pieces of driftwood knocking against one another, placed as we were they would be almost salvation to us. So I continued to swim in the same direction. But it was not driftwood, and it was the cutter—the cutter heading about north-west, and coming up—thank goodness—from a little behind me. The question now was: could I cut her off? Reader, have you ever witnessed a boat-race?—so have I; have you ever bet on a boat-race?—I am afraid that I must plead guilty to having done the same. But in future I shall never take the same interest in the sport; believe me that, beside a boat-hunt, a boat-race is tameness itself.

Well, I swam my best, and found—that I should miss her by ten yards! Now for my last card. Waiting until I was as near to her as I ever should be—that is, barring the chance that my card should turn up trumps, I raised myself in the water, and flung my rope, in a big loose coil, straight at her stern, then settled down to swimming again. A few strokes, and I was sure that I was gaining on her—my rope had done its work, that is to say, it had fouled the screw. Had I tried holding one end of it, it would most likely have slipped off; but being quite loose, it had wound itself so effectually round the blades and boss, that later, when we tried to get it off, the only way in which we could do so was by cutting it off in little bits. By the time I reached her, she was almost motionless.

You may be sure that I did not lose much time in firing a rifle to let the crew know that they had once more a boat to go to. In ten minutes or so all hands were on board; and very glad we were to dry our clothes, make some cocoa, and smoke our pipes.

As for the dhow, she got away, but was caught next voyage.

LUX IN TENEBRIS.

THE castle window on the height
Burns crimson through the leafless trees:
But lo! the sun in frosty seas
Goes down, and all the world is night.

Not all. For there, amid the gloom,
The darkened window glows again
With softer light: the ruddy pane
Gives token to the night of home:

And leaping with the leaping flame,
Soft shadows on the ceiling move—
A lover reading to his love
Of Camelot and Arthur's fame.

Oh heavy heart, from sorrow win
A guerdon countervailing doubt:
God sometimes drowns the light without,
Lest thou forget the light within.

CUTHBERT M'EVOC.

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OTTERBURN.

THE battle of Otterburn was one of the most famous contests recorded in the annals of chivalry. It was not a national contest in the sense in which Bannockburn is, although it occurred in the course of an invasion of England by the Scots. The fate of nations did not hang upon the issue. It was in reality a personal fight, in which the rivalries of two powerful Border chiefs were put to the arbitrament of the sword. Each of these chieftains was a sort of king in his own country—the Percy in Northumberland, the Douglas in Teviotdale; and the fight that ensued was perhaps all the more bitter and bloody for this element of personal rivalry and clan hatred that entered into it.

It is not, however, to the strict records of the historian that the name of Otterburn owes its popularity. This has been the work of the old ballad-writers—the nameless bards and musicians of a far past who ‘sung other names, but left their own unsung.’ The older and the later ballads of ‘Chevy Chase,’ as well as the English and the Scottish ballads on ‘The Battle of Otterbourne,’ point evidently to the same contest. The outstanding feature in all these is, that a Percy and a Douglas had a great fight, the inevitable horrors of which were tempered by the fine spirit of chivalry that animated both the principals in the fight and their followers, and the result of which battle was that the Douglas lost his life and the Percy was ‘led captive away.’ The older ballad of ‘Chevy Chase,’ which probably belongs to the fifteenth century, was perhaps that of which Sir Philip Sydney was thinking when he said: ‘I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas, that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet.’ Even the learned Ben Jonson declared that he had rather have been the author of ‘Chevy Chase’ than of all his own works. So true is it that song is more powerful than science; that that which touches the heart and stirs the imagination, even though it be but a simple lilt of verse, is more enduring than the

ponderous tomes that speak only to the intellect.

Yet this popular appreciation of the ballads in which the prowess of the Douglas and Percy is embalmed has not been without its drawbacks, for it has led to a great misunderstanding of the leading events of which the battle formed but an episode—though indeed the chief episode. If you were to question people on the subject of the battle and its origin, probably nine persons out of ten would answer that the fight was the result of an attempt on the part of the one chieftain to hunt upon the lands of the other—a kind of poaching raid on a great scale checked by an opposing army of game preservers. All the ballads, whether they are written from the Scottish or the English point of view, agree in this. The older ballad of ‘Chevy Chase’ has it:

The Percy out of Northumberland,
And a vow to God made he,
That he would hunt in the mountains
Of Cheviot within days three,
In the mangre of doughty Douglas,
And all that ever with him be.

The later version, also, in relating the ‘woeful hunting’ that once did ‘in Chevy Chase befall,’ says:

To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl Percy took his way.

Both the English and the Scottish versions of ‘The Ballad of Otterbourne,’ while agreeing that it was a hunting expedition, differ, however, from the ‘Chevy Chase’ ballads in so far as they represent Douglas and not Percy to have been the intruder.

It fell about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty Douglas boun’d him to ride
Into England, to drive a prey.

All these ballads so agreeing as to the conflict having arisen out of a hunting raid, not anything that may be written by the historian to an opposite effect will ever succeed in eradicating the popular mistake.

The scene of the battle itself is not, we should think, a frequent place of pilgrimage, as it is not conveniently accessible. It lies far away among the high and solitary moors of Northumberland, where they stretch, brown and naked, southwards from the crest of the Cheviots. Bellingham Station, on the North Tyne Railway, is perhaps the best starting-point for the pedestrian, and he has a walk northward of from eight to ten miles, over a weary tract of moorland, before he reaches the little village that bears the famous name of Otterburn. All this district of Northumberland lies at a high level above the sea, and as the soil is wet and sour no trees grow upon it; hence the landscape has a dreary and uninviting aspect, especially to one who has just quitted the beautifully wooded vale of North Tyne, with its rich green slopes and its crystal winding river.

The little village of Otterburn lies in Redesdale, and receives its name from the brook that here comes down from the hills, and falls into the Rede Water. Near to it is the ancient Roman road known as Watling Street, which runs up Redesdale for some miles, then crosses the Cheviots, and descends into Scotland, being traceable still for most of the way until near Melrose. The fact of the vicinity of the field of Otterburn to this old Roman Road accounts no doubt for this being the scene of the battle, as this road afforded the Scots an excellent means of returning—as we shall find they were returning—into Scotland.

The battle was brought about in this way. During the reign of Edward III. and that of his successor Richard II., Scotland had been grievously harassed by the English. Time and again had the Southron forces marched across the Borders, burning and slaying and laying waste wherever they went. The Scots, so harassed, were fain to make friends with France, which country was also much pressed by the English. In 1385, the king of France sent one of his generals to Scotland with a thousand men-at-arms, knights, and esquires, to assist the Scots against England; but with them also he sent what was still more acceptable to the Scots, poor as they had been now rendered by the constant harryings of the English—namely, the sum of fifty thousand livres, and no fewer than twelve hundred stands of complete mail. No doubt at the battle of Otterburn many a French helm and hauberk had its metal tested under English lance and axe. But the French men-at-arms themselves proved rather a trouble to the Scots, and nothing was effected by their help against England.

But in 1388, the year in which Otterburn was fought, the Scots roused themselves for a war of reprisal against their Southron enemies. The English government under Richard II. was weak and divided, even the noblemen on the English Border being at enmity among themselves. This, in the opinion of the Scottish barons, afforded a favourable opportunity to strike their long-meditated blow. All the arrangements for the invasion were made with as much privacy as possible, so that the English might be taken unawares; and on St Oswald's day, 5th August, the Scottish forces met near Jedburgh to the number of forty thousand men. But secret as their proceedings had been, the rumour of

them had reached the Earl of Northumberland. Hence, when the Scots met in council of war in the church of Southdean, at the foot of the Cheviots, an English squire, in the dress and arms of a Scotsman, entered among them, as if he had been in the retinue of one of the Scottish nobles, and so listened to all their deliberations. But when he retired from the church, he found that his horse, which he had fastened up with the others, had been stolen. Not wishing to attract attention to himself, he proceeded to walk quietly away. But two sharp-eyed Scottish knights saw him thus walking off, booted and spurred.

'I have witnessed many wonderful things,' said one to the other, 'but what I now see is equal to any. That man yonder has, I believe, lost his horse, and yet he makes no inquiry about it. On my troth, I doubt much if he belongs to us; let us go after him and ascertain.'

When they came up to and questioned him, he prevaricated and contradicted himself; upon which they seized and carried him before the council. There, under threats of immediate execution, he confessed his espionage, and revealed the English plans. These were, to wait until it was seen whether the Scots should enter England on the eastern or the western frontier; and when the event had decided which, the English were to advance into Scotland on the opposite side, and so harry the country in their absence. In consequence of this information, the Scots leaders resolved to divide their army into two divisions, sending the main body into England by Carlisle, and the second by way of Northumberland. The latter division consisted of about four hundred mounted men-at-arms, with two thousand infantry, and was placed under the command of James Earl of Douglas. Southdean was but a few miles from the head of Rede Water, over the Cheviots; and down this valley the Douglas soon led his men into the heart of Northumberland.

The English spy having been sent a prisoner to Berwick, the first news the Northumbrians had of the Scotch invasion was in the clouds of smoke which ascended wherever they passed. The Scots spoiled and burned as they went along. And so rapid was their march, that they had entered the rich county of Durham, penetrated to the gates of Durham itself, burning and killing and gathering booty everywhere, had returned and recrossed the Tyne, and were before the walls of Newcastle by Friday the 14th of August, within eight days from the time they started. To account for the rapidity of these movements, it must be borne in mind, that although only the men-at-arms fought on horseback, the infantry when on the march were also on horseback. They rode on small horses, and could act on occasion as light cavalry; but on the eve of a battle, their horses or ponies were dismissed in the charge of attendants, and their riders fought on foot. And Froissart tells us that on this occasion the two thousand infantry were, on the march, all mounted.

It was here, then, before the gates of Newcastle, that the series of chivalrous exploits began which ended in the fierce conflict of Otterburn. The Earl of Northumberland had himself remained at his castle of Alnwick, but sent his two sons, Sir Henry Percy ('Hotspur') and Sir Ralph to defend Newcastle. Here between the

Friday and the following Monday, the Scots had made various attempts upon the town, and, as was the habit of the times, many a fight took place before the barriers. But it was on Monday, the 17th, the great event happened; for on that day the Douglas and the Percy met in personal conflict, when the latter was unhorsed, and his lance, with the pennon thereto attached, taken by Douglas. Hotspur was only twenty-three years of age, while Douglas was about thirty-eight; both experience and strength may therefore be said to have been on the side of the Douglas. Nevertheless, the loss of his pennon was a galling affront to Percy and the English, while its capture was none the less a matter of rejoicing to Earl Douglas and the Scots.

The Earl, as he bore away his prize, exclaimed: 'I will carry this token of your prowess with me to Scotland, and plant it on the tower of my castle at Dalkeith, that it may be seen from afar.'

'By God,' replied Hotspur, 'you shall not even bear it out of Northumberland. Be assured you shall never have that pennon to brag of.'

Douglas answered: 'You must come this night and seek it, then. I will fix your pennon before my tent, and shall see if you will venture to take it away.'

Accordingly, Douglas planted the spear with the pennon at the door of his pavilion, and appointed a strong guard, as he fully expected a night attack. And so there would have been had the heady Hotspur had his own way. But the English leaders dissuaded him. They did not know where the rest of the Scottish army was, and might be led into an ambush.

The night having thus passed without battle, Douglas began his return into Scotland. He had a rich booty with him, and every hour's delay would strengthen the enemy, who were gathering assistance from every quarter. By four o'clock on the morning of the 18th, he was at Ponteland, eight miles from Newcastle, and there he tarried for a few hours till the town was taken and its owner made prisoner. Then the Scots once more began their march towards the Cheviots, and in the afternoon were before the tower of Otterburn, fully thirty miles from Newcastle. They attacked this tower also, but did not succeed in taking it; and when evening approached the Scots took measures to intrench themselves for the night. With this view Douglas selected a strong situation on a spur of hill about a mile in advance.

They lighted high on Otterbourne,
Among the bent sae brown.

Here he probably found the remains of a round hill-fort, and within this he made all secure for the night. The ground in front of him, and which formed the site of the battle, was an easy slope descending towards Otterburn and the Rede Water, with marshy land on both sides; and, though the slope is now bare and treeless, it was then protected in many parts by trees and brush-wood. As Percy describes it in the ballad:

The roe full reckless there she rins,
To make the game and glee;
The falcon and the pheasant both,
Among the bolts on hie.

This action of Douglas, of intrenching himself above Otterburn, was against the better judgment of the barons and knights in his train. They would have preferred to make good their return into Scotland, of which they were within a few hours' march. But Douglas's chivalrous instincts as a knight were, like those of James the Fourth, too strong for his prudence as a leader. He had promised to give the Percy an opportunity of winning back his pennon, and here at Otterburn should he wait for him.

'Thither will I come,' proud Percy said,
'By the might of Our Ladye!'—
'There will I bide thee,' said the Douglas,
'My troth I plight to thee.'

Next morning, a portion of the Scottish army renewed their attack on Otterburn tower, but the place was strong and well defended, and withstood the assault successfully. At night, once more, the Scots withdrew to the shelter of their camp. It was the evening of Wednesday the 19th of August. The sun had not yet sunk in the western sky, when low down on the eastern horizon rose the red moon, now at the full, all night long to shed its dim rays upon as stern and deadly a conflict as ever broke the stillness of night. The chiefs, wearied with the day's fruitless assault, had relieved themselves of their heavy armour, and were sitting at supper in their 'side gowns,' when the cry broke that the Percy was upon them. And so it was. Had the English attack been directed against the pavilions where the knights were, the discomfiture of the Scots had been inevitable; but it so happened that the portion of the camp which they surprised on the east side was that occupied by the sutlers and camp-followers. Bands of infantry were at once despatched to maintain the fight until the knights and men-at-arms had time to don their armour; and so hastily and imperfectly was this done, that Douglas went forth to the battle without his helmet, and many other lords and knights were equally unprepared.

The English, like the Scots, fought this battle on foot. The dim light and the nature of the ground did not admit of the movements of cavalry. Percy was at the head of eight or nine thousand men, thus greatly outnumbering the Scots; but Douglas, when he issued from his tent, led his knights round the back of the camp, and assailed the English in flank. The fight was long and stubborn, and at first the English were like to have the victory. But about midnight, heavy clouds began to roll across the sky, shutting out the light of the moon; and the wearied combatants withdrew their forces for a time, glad, no doubt, of a brief breathing-space. When once more moonlight was shed upon the scene, the fight was resumed. Seeing the English massed strongly at one point, and anxious to recover the spirits of his men, Douglas seized a huge battle-axe, which few but he could wield, and followed only by his armed chaplain and his son bearing his banner, he rushed into the midst of the enemy, shouting his war-cry of 'A Douglas! a Douglas!' The English ranks opened before his terrific onslaught, his hand dealing death wherever it fell; but he went too far, and was hopelessly involved in the press, and could not return. Borne down by spears on every side, at last he

fell mortally wounded, while his chaplain stood over him to protect his body. The Scottish knights rushed in to his assistance, and the English were driven back. The Douglas prayed his companions to hide his fall from his followers, and to raise his standard once more as if he were at their head. This was done; and the Scots, shouting his war-cry, made so terrible an assault upon the English, that the latter were broken up and began to quit the field. In the press, both the Percy and his brother were surrounded and taken prisoners, while the Scots chased the English with great slaughter long five miles from the field.

The Scottish ballad gives a touching picture of the dying Douglas. Addressing his nephew, he says:

'My wound is deep; I fain would sleep;
Take thou the vanguard of the three:
And bury me by the bracken bush
That grows on yonder lily lee.'

They buried him not there, however; but bore his remains home with them to the Abbey Church of Melrose.

And there the dying lamps did burn,
Before thy low and lonely urn,
O gallant chief of Otterbourne!

His son, Archibald Douglas of Cavers, who bore his standard, carried it home with him, where in Cavers house it is still preserved, along with two ladies' gauntlets, beautifully embroidered with pearls, known as 'The Percy Relics.' These latter were probably attached to the spear which the Douglas took from Percy under the walls of Newcastle.

J. R.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXII.—'LOVE THE GIFT IS LOVE THE DEBT.'

WHEN she and her luggage were safely bestowed in the dogcart, when she had been well wrapped in rugs, and when they had dashed out of the station into the raw darkness, then Isabel thanked George for coming for her.

'Nobody knows I've come,' said George. 'We waited all day yesterday for you, and were just beginning to think you were not coming at all, when in came your telegram.'

'But that made it all right—did it not?' said she.

'Well,' said George, with a joyous laugh, 'nearly right. But you didn't set down what line you were coming by: there are three lines, and each has a night-train.'

'How foolish of me!' she exclaimed. 'And you have been waiting about for three trains!' She considered him a moment, as if she found him a more eager lover than she had bargained for. 'I found,' said she, by way of apology, 'that I had a good many things to do yesterday, and I thought I would take the night-train for the sake of having a new experience.'

'So like you, Bell,' laughed George, 'to want a new experience!'

'Is it?' said she simply. 'I suppose it is.'

When they were well out on the clear high-

way, and one hand was enough to hold the reins, he put down his other hand to seek hers; but she affected not to understand his purpose, and let her hands remain hid. The mare knew that she was going home to a bran-mash, and she spanked along at such a rate that speech was impracticable; so the two sat silent, and wrapped against the cold air; and mound and tree, cottage and bush, fled fast away from them, looking merely like blacker features and articulations of the general darkness.

None of the household—save a groom to take charge of the mare—was astir when they arrived. Isabel retired at once to freshen herself with a bath and to change her dress. She did not come down till the breakfast bell rang; and then, when she had made her apologies and explanations, there were presented to her a great surprise and determining shock.

They sat at breakfast, when Mr Suffield, who had been running his eye up and down the columns of *The Lancashire Gazette*, murmuring the while 'H'm! Ha!' suddenly exclaimed to the table in general: 'Bless my soul! Now, what do you think of this?' And then immediately to Isabel in particular: 'What do you think of this, Bell?'

'Well, what is it?' cried all.

'It's in "Our London Correspondence,"' said Suffield. 'Listen: "The unequivocal and brilliant success of "The Backbiter" at the afternoon performance yesterday at the Variety Theatre has compelled the management to disclose the name of the author. The audience insisted with stamping of feet and reiterated cries of "Author! Name! Name! Author!" and the manager stepped before the curtain, and said that the author was not in the house, but he would give his name—"Alan Ainsworth."—There!' said Suffield. 'What do you think of that?—Did you know his play was going to be produced yesterday, Bell?'

'No,' she answered; 'I did not. I did not even know it was finished.' She had an overwhelming sense of pain and desolation, as if this were the final cut that severed all connection betwixt herself and Ainsworth: he had not thought it worth his while to give her his confidence, even in this small matter. She had come down extremely doubtful what answer she should give to George: now she had no doubt whatever.

"The play," Suffield resumed, "will be placed at once in the evening bill of the theatre; and while the enterprising manager may be congratulated on having secured a piece that is certain to run for many days and to take a place in the repertory of the theatre, Mr Ainsworth is no less to be felicitated on having in all human probability won fortune as well as fame. Mr Ainsworth was known, though it may be but anonymously, as a brilliant member of the staff of this journal until less than a year ago, when he was invited to assume a responsible position on the metropolitan press. Mr Ainsworth has shown he can do admirable work; and his friends, of whom the present writer has the privilege of counting himself one, are confident he will go far."—There!' cried Suffield, slapping the paper on the table. 'What do you think of that?'

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'The hand is the hand of the London Correspondent,' thought Isabel vaguely to herself; 'but the voice is the voice of Alexander.—He deserves his success,' said she aloud: 'he has worked hard for it.' She spoke quietly but frankly, and no one guessed there was the pain of separation at her heart.

'I always said,' observed Mr Suffield, 'that Alan would turn up trumps: though he might have let us know about his *matinée*. Let's spend a shilling—it's Christmas, you know—in congratulating him.'

'And he's going to make his fortune!' said Mrs Suffield meditatively, with her eye on Isabel. 'I have heard that a very successful dramatist makes in these days of high prices and "No fees" as much as Fifteen Thousand a year!'

'No, mother!' exclaimed Euphemia.

'That must be a *very* successful dramatist, indeed, my dear,' said Mr Suffield.

'What about this telegram of congratulation?' said George.

They discussed the wording of the telegram for some time; for Mr Suffield—who had found a telegraph form and a pencil, which he meant to use himself—would hear of nothing but 'Many happy returns.—Returns, don't you see? There's nothing a manager or a playwright values so much as *returns* and *many* of them.' It was at length conceded that the phrase upon which he had set his heart should stand, but that there be set in front of it this: 'We congratulate you on the production of your play.' That done, they all signed it, as if the handwriting could be transmitted, in manner following: 'GEORGE SUFFIELD; JOAN SUFFIELD; EUPHEMIA; GEORGE.'

George paused, before handing it to Isabel, to count the words. Reckoning the address, there was only room for one word more to complete the shilling's-worth. 'There is only one more word wanted,' said he: 'you had better sign "ISABEL."—That will do very well,' he added with a smile; 'it will look like a Suffield manifesto.'

Isabel did not like it; but she wrote as was suggested, saying to herself, 'What does it matter?'

After breakfast, she went into the garden with Euphemia, and sauntered up and down among the flower-beds, as we saw her at the beginning of this story; but the beds were now bare and waste as her heart. There George soon found them; and seeing him coming, Phemy found an excuse for leaving her, and she prepared for what she knew was coming.

'Do you remember?' he said. 'It was last Whitsuntide that I saw you and Phemy here; it was in the beginning of the day that I spoke to you of something. Do you remember it?' he asked.

'Yes,' said she with self-possession; 'I remember it.' She remembered, too, that on that occasion she had come upon Alan Ainsworth in the conservatory.

'I asked you a question then, Bell, and you put me off; and then I begged that I might put it again in a year. It is less than a year; but I have found a year too long to wait. Tell me, Bell, am I right in thinking that you *quite* understand why I have asked you to come here this Christmas?'

'Quite,' she answered.

'Then,' said he, intensely moved, 'I may ask the question?' He took her hand and paused; the pause was not long, but it seemed long to Isabel.

'May I take the question as asked?' said she, looking down and making arabesques with her toe on the gravel.

'Bell!' he murmured. 'Then—then you accept me?'

'I do, George,' she answered. For an instant she looked him frankly in the face, and then dropped her eyes again.

'Oh, my dear!' he exclaimed, and folded her in his arms before she was aware.

To that she submitted; but when he ventured to press closer and to seek to kiss her, a sudden dislike of his embrace seized her, and she put him away. 'Not now, George!' said she—'not now!' and fled into the house.

George might have thought there should have been more in the asking of a wife than he had found; but if he did think so he did not show it. He went about exuding happiness. That he had come to the understanding he desired with Isabel was apparent; yet it was formally made known to his parents. Suffield took Isabel aside to welcome her as his prospective daughter-in-law.

'I'm glad, my dear,' said he, pressing her hand; 'it's what I've wished for. Though lately,' he added, 'I had got to think that it was going to be Ainsworth.'

It was a busy Christmas Day. They all went to church in the morning, and exchanged greetings and salutations of 'Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!' on this side and on that. They returned to find the post-bag just arrived: the post is always late on Christmas Day. The bag was crammed with Christmas cards and greetings addressed to every member of the family; for the Suffields now had troops of friends. For Isabel there was but one; yet even that she was surprised to receive, for she had told no one she was coming to Lancashire for Christmas. When she recognised the handwriting of the superscription, her heart beat ominously: it was Alan Ainsworth's. She opened it before them all, recklessly, for they all were occupied with their own communications. Her envelope contained a letter as well as a card of greeting. She read the letter eagerly, greedily. 'I owe you,' it ran, 'and my good friends with whom your servant has told me you are staying' (He had called, then!), 'an apology for the business of this afternoon. It seems rude and ungrateful, perhaps, but my only reason for not confiding to you the secret of the production was that I was afraid the play might fail. That was why I also suppressed my name. I don't think I could have looked any of you in the face again if you had known, and all the world had known, that it had failed. I know you will all rejoice with me that it has not failed, and that there seems the prospect of a long run before it. There are seats ready for you as soon as you are ready to accept them. Are you returning to town soon? I wish to see you to explain matters.'

When Isabel read that aloud—except the final sentence—to the family, George was silent and frowned a little, though no exception could be taken to anything he had heard read.

'We're going back to London on the last day of the year,' said Mrs Suffield: 'we have several engagements to fulfil. Will that suit you, Bell?'

'Oh, quite,' answered Bell.

The rest of that eventful day was crammed with gaiety and feasting. A good many guests came to dinner, and after dinner there was merry dancing; and so the time passed without thought. It was not till she had retired to her room very late that Isabel had leisure to consider what she had done and who she was. She was the affianced wife of her cousin George! She had promised to marry him!—to tie her life to his! She did not shudder at the thought of him; she was only dully miserable. This seemed to her a very poor conclusion to have reached. She was like a religious enthusiast who, after having had visions of heavenly glory, dreams of a divine presence and expectations of fulfilled prayer, suddenly finds himself shut in with a mere reality of earth, which causes him to doubt all he had formerly believed, and to despair of all he had formerly hoped for. When she had lived her simple, tedious, untrammelled life of schoolmistress, what thrills of joy were hers, what dreams of happiness! It was only now she recognised how much she must have dreamed, when she knew she was tied to a reality which was the fulfilment of nothing she had ever dreamed of or had longed for. Oh, what romantic visions she had had of heaven and earth filled with delight!—of Love that with its light and warmth would blend all the varied experiences of life into one Joy—of 'Love the gift, and Love the debt!' Now all that was done with; the whole world was become gray and dull, and shrunken to a wretched round of going out and coming in, eating and drinking, sleeping and waking! And she herself, in her folly and blindness, had wilfully chosen this result! No one but herself was to blame! Why had she been so precipitate? Alan Ainsworth promised explanations! Perhaps she had misunderstood him!

'Oh, my love! my love!' she moaned in her anguish, pressing her hands to her eyes as she paced up and down her room. 'What have I done? What have I done?'

Yet George seemed satisfied and happy. He was not to blame; and how could she take his happiness from him? She knew, now that she had been put to the touch, that she did not love him at all, as a woman ought to love a man with whom she means to identify her life; but that was not because he was unworthy of her love. She now saw, too, that in committing outrage on herself she was doing wrong to George, who by her was prevented from knowing the unreserved, romantic love of another woman! Yet George was happy in loving her and in believing she loved him.

Next morning she went down to breakfast, resolved to show no sadness or regret: it would be the merest selfishness to trouble others with her vain feelings. It was remarked that she looked pale and had dark circles under her dark eyes; but she declared it was nothing: she had not slept well, she said, and her head ached.

The day was filled with engagements: a mid-day dinner in the school-room to the work-people, and a tea afterwards to the children, and last of

all, a family visit to the theatre. But yet there were intervals for private conference, of which George assiduously tried to avail himself. He sought to enjoy the accepted lover's privilege of sitting close to and embracing his mistress; but these endeavours Isabel did her utmost to defeat. And George was not offended; for he set her conduct down merely to the coyness usual in a maiden. Isabel made one or two faint efforts to shake his belief in her.

'Are you quite sure,' she asked once, 'that I am quite the woman you ought to marry?'

'Look here, Bell,' said he; 'don't ask such absurd questions: they are not suited to my intelligence. I have not known a great many women; but I don't need to know any more to be able to tell that the woman I have chosen is the one woman in the world for me.'

After that, what could she say that would not be simply a repudiation of her promise to him?

At the same time she was troubled with the necessity of sending Alan Ainsworth an answer to his question: When would she be at home? Should she write to him that she was engaged to marry her cousin, and she had better communicate with him no more? But would not that be attributing an intimate importance to the situation which he might fail to understand? She ended by sending him a line merely: 'I shall be home on the last evening of the year.'

(To be continued.)

CORNISH TIN-MINES.

TIN is decidedly the most interesting of the mineral treasures of Cornwall. Even in the days when recorded history was not, the Cornish tin was in some rude fashion mined and rendered usable for the purposes of man. The trade so carefully fostered by the Phœnicians was developed during Roman times, only to be neglected when the Saxons and Danes struggled for the mastery of England. It was revived in later centuries.

The earliest tin-mining was of the type known as 'streaming,' and was of course conducted at or near to the surface. The streams of tin were parcels of the ore that at some remote period had been detached from a lode and swept down-hill, most probably by alluvial denudation. Carew, in his 'Survey of Cornwall' (published in 1602), quaintly considered the denuding force that originally laid bare the surface tin deposits to be 'Noah's flood.' The primitive streaming operations were carried on with rude implements of stone or bronze, pickaxes of deer-horn, and subsequently, wooden shovels. With improved tools the miners were enabled to carry their quest farther into the earth; and shafts and tunnels were excavated, and mining for tin gradually developed until its present condition was attained. Much of the Cornish tin, especially before the beginning of the present century, found its way to London; and an important factor in determining the price of the article was the element of risk involved in the long voyage necessary to place it on the London market. The tin-merchant knew how to take advantage of these risks; and when non-occurent, to invent imaginary ones to take their place. Rigging the market was an operation quite as well understood three

centuries ago as now, for—to quote once more from Richard Carew—‘About the price there groweth much adoe betwene the marchants and the owners before they can jumpe to an agreement. The marchant unfoldeth his packe of strange newes, which either he brought with him from London (where most of them dwell) or forged by the way, telling what great likelihood there is of warres, what danger of pirates at sea, how much of the fore-bought tynne lieth on their hands, &c. The owner, on the other side, stoppeth his eares against these charmes, answers his newes with the Spaniard’s “Credo en Dios,” encounters his reasons with the present scarcitie and charges of getting and working tynne, and so keeping up the price.’ Carew then goes on to observe very shrewdly that ‘in the end, after much bidding and bowing, varying and delaying, commonly that marchant who hath most money to bestow and that owner who hath most tynne to sell doe make the price.’

Enterprise at the present day is rather devoted to developing the tin mines already in existence than sinking new ones. The miner or tinner of bygone days was a tin-finder as well. Even at the present there is ample opportunity for the exercise of the tin-finding faculty in tracing the direction of the veins of metal under the surface and ascertaining the best position for shafts—arts which tend to secure the maximum of ore with a minimum of labour.

Science has done much in assisting the metal-seekers in their arduous tasks; but still there is no golden rule to simplify the tin-seeker’s work. They say: ‘Where it is, there it is;’ and again: ‘By cutting the ground the metal is found’—both pieces of tin-lore that practical experience has over and over again proved by demonstration to be true. Occasionally, it happens that a lode has been discovered by accidental means. The wearing of the high-roads has more than once revealed the evidences of a rich deposit of tin beneath. The run of a lode has sometimes been discovered by the want or weakness of the grass along a particular section of a field. These instances, however, are but the exceptions to the general rule that tin-mining calls forth the best energies and intelligence of the seeker after subterranean wealth. It is the play for these two qualities that tin-mining affords which has done so much to develop the Cornish miner. In addition, he possesses resourcefulness and independence in a very marked degree. He is no mere underground labourer, as many miners admittedly are; he often works for his own hand, his remuneration being largely dependent upon the success that follows his intelligence and energy in exploiting a new venture. All over the world the Cornish tinman is in request as a miner; and during the Australian gold-fever, many of the steady persevering gold-diggers who amassed considerable wealth had received their training in English tin-mines.

The hardships and difficulties of a Cornish miner’s life are of the greatest. When it is borne in mind that in some of the mines there are upwards of fifty or sixty miles of shafts and tunnels, and that often a miner’s work lies in narrow tunnells remote from the shaft, it will be seen that his life is no easy one. In some cases the metal has to be followed through ser-

pentine or granite, in others it must be tracked through adhesive beds of slaty clay. The tunnels are small, the air none of the freshest, and the temperature considerably higher than at the surface. Active exertion in a hot atmosphere means copious perspiration; and the miner tries to guard against resulting risks by wearing underclothing of thick flannel. His outer apparel consists of a suit of coarse canvas, which, whatever may be its original colour, soon becomes stained a murky yellow. A strong hat, or rather helmet, to protect the head from falls from the roof, and also from incautious contact with the ceilings of the subterranean passages where the tin is sought, completes the attire. In the front of the hat is carried a candle; and the appearance that a miner presents as, thus equipped, with inclined head and bent shoulders, he tramps along the narrow tunnels, resembles nothing so much as Atlas supporting the universe; for the roof of the cavern seems in the uncertain light quite superincumbent upon his shoulders. A still more peculiar effect is produced by the voices of the miners when they are heard in some of the remoter recesses of the mine; the sounds echo and re-echo from the sides of the tunnel, and travel in reverberating measures to considerable distances, seeming to come from a company of gnomes engaged in their underground labours.

To the actual work of mining must be added in many cases the task of reaching that part of the mine where the tin is being worked. It is no exaggeration to state that some miners have spent week after week and month after month three hours per day upon ladders while journeying from the mouth of the shaft to the workings. Of course, where conditions admit, the men are hauled out of the mine either up a perpendicular shaft or along an inclined plane.

When a man has finished his shift below and is about to repair to his humble home on the surface, he speaks of it as ‘going to grass.’ His enjoyments are of the calm and philosophical order; he plunges into no excesses, but employs his leisure in recruiting his stock of health and energy, ready for the next descent to the scene of his labours.

That a good miner makes a good gardener is a remark that the Cornish tinman verifies to the full. He is not only fond of agricultural pursuits, but his little holdings are models of careful spade cultivation. They are as a rule rigorously fenced off from surrounding properties with a precision and completeness rather suggestive of a mining claim than the mere delimitation of a few fields and gardens.

With all his sterling qualities and temperate habits, the Cornish miner is far from being long-lived. A former vicar of St Just, a typical mining district, was once heard to say that he had seen many widows, but not a single widower. The reason is not far to seek. It is not accident, but disease, that makes such terrible inroads in the ranks of the miners. He may slip from the wearying ladder, it is true; a block of rock may fall from the ceiling of the tunnel; or the blasting charge may explode prematurely with fatal results; water, too, may burst into the mine and drown the poor workers like rats in a hole. But though these influences may slay their thousands, diseases born of exposure, first to the heat and

dampness of the mine, and then it may be to the keenness of the outer winter air, undoubtedly may count their victims by the tens of thousands.

One of the most interesting features of mining in Cornwall is the pumping-engine. These triumphs of engineering skill are absolutely essential to the very existence of the mines. The mean annual rainfall for the county of Cornwall is about fifty inches, so that the amount of water that penetrates into the mines must be considerable. In some instances the Cornish engines pump water from depths of two thousand feet; and in one case at least the water that is thus raised to the surface comes from recesses in the earth two thousand five hundred feet from the surface. In the case of mines such as Botallack, where the workings extend beneath the sea, there is the percolation from the sea-bed to guard against. This the miners are unconcerned about, as, when they observe a thin stream come oozing through the roof or sides of their tunnel, they calmly daub in clay with the view of checking the leakage into the mine. A visitor to this mine observed a wooden plug in the ceiling of the tunnel through which the guide was conducting him, and being of a curious turn of mind, he inquired as to its use. When told that the purpose it served was to keep out the sea, he came to the conclusion that he had no desire for further subterranean exploration, and asked his conductor to take him back to the surface forthwith.

Sunday is the great day of the miner's week. He may, during the remaining six days, merit the comparison to a grub, toiling and burrowing in the earth; but on Sunday he removes from him the signs of his toil, dresses himself in sober black, and in company with his wife, spends the day soberly and religiously.

Of the Cornish mines it is perhaps truer than of other English mining districts, that 'A poor surface gives a rich soil.' This is especially applicable to the successful mines. In their vicinity the country has a most dreary aspect. The moorland with its huge blocks of moorstone or granite, and its wealth of heath and gorse, is there strewn with unsightly waste-heaps—small mountains of refuse, which show to what an extent the underground operations have been extended. Piles of mud and pits of slime, too, add to the dreariness of the scene; while the tall chimneys of the pumping, winding, stamping, or smelting works do much to detract from the romance that is generally associated with the county of Cornwall. One sighs for the 'meadows studded with herd and fold,' which are not wanting even in the midst of many of our colliery districts. Among collieries, however, there is little useless material brought to the surface. In the case of the Cornish mines, the tin forms only a small percentage of the roughly-broken rocks which the great 'kibbles' or barrels bring to the surface; hence the barren waste-heaps, the mud, and the slime.

Some of these waste-heaps, though, are barren no longer; they are covered with verdure, not, however, by the hand of man, but by the bounty of nature. These ancient indications of past mining activity go back, some of them, to Roman times; and some bear unmistakable evidence of

having been turned over more than once; for in several instances the rubbish-heaps of early days, when only surface-mining was practised, have been found to cover a rich store of metal deposited in the ground beneath. One feature of abandoned works that is even more striking and impressive than the shapeless heaps of ruin that mark the site of the former surface-buildings, is the occurrence of the deep black pools, most of them, according to local tradition, bottomless, and having in the centre of their bed the shaft leading to tunnels that never again will resound to the click of the miner's pick or the thundering of his mighty sledge. Many of these abandoned workings still bear evidence of their past success or failure. The miners of bygone days used to bequeath their experience to those who came after them by planting the banks adjacent to a prosperous mine with sprigs of elder; while an unsuccessful venture was commonly indicated by blackthorn.

No article dealing with the Cornish tin-mines would be complete without some allusion to the Stannaries or Stannary Courts (*L. stannum*, tin), which in former times exercised almost absolute power over the whole business of tin-getting. By ancient charters, the Cornish tinnerns were exempt from all other jurisdiction than that of the Stannary Courts save in cases of 'land, life, and limb.' An officer was appointed by the Duke of Cornwall, and was called the Lord Warden of the Stannaries. When he thought it necessary, he could summon the twenty-four stannators of Cornwall to the Stannary Parliament, there to revise old and make new laws relative to tin matters. The last of these parliaments met in 1752; and after that date there was practically no business done in the Stannary Courts. Taxes on tin had been paid to the Dukes or Earls of Cornwall for many centuries. The smelted blocks were carried to certain towns to be coined—that is, stamped with the Duchy seal before they could be sold; and heavy fines were imposed upon persons who attempted to evade the stamping dues. In 1838, however, these were abolished, and the last relic of the old Stannary Courts disappeared, a compensation being awarded to the Duchy in place of the revenue formerly derived from tin.

Many are the crises through which the English tin-trade has passed. Leaving out those which are matter of very ancient history, we find great distress in Cornwall in the year 1727. The scarcity of corn reduced the tinnerns to desperate straits. Sir John St Aubyn came forward and generously advanced money to keep them from starving and 'plundering their neighbours.' The last-named reason for Sir John's kindness is clearly indicative of the sturdy resourcefulness that characterised the miners of the early part of the eighteenth century. By 1730, the tin-mines were again flourishing. In 1744, however, another serious danger threatened the industry. England was then at war with France, and the small trading-vessels that carried the tin from Cornwall to London would of course form an easy prey to the French. At this crisis, St Aubyn again came to the assistance of the tinnerns, and obtained from the Admiralty adequate convoy for the tin-laden vessels.

About twenty years ago a far more serious danger than temporary famine or seizure of tin

cargoes by foreign foes was that which threatened to make English tin-mining altogether unprofitable. Much tin had been discovered in the East, in the neighbourhood of the Straits Settlements, and this sent down the value of the English article to an almost ruinous price. Many of the mines ceased working. The miners sought fresh fields of labour in foreign lands, and the prophets of ill averred that in a few years the British tin-trade would cease to have any save an historical importance. In 1870 and 1871 the price of tin was much inflated. Then came the importation of Australian and Straits tin, and prices dropped, and continued to drop to the great distress of the miners and shareholders.

The history of the Wheal Owles Mine during this crisis is most interesting. The Wheal Owles is one of the St Just group of mines, and was the scene of the recent lamentable flooding, when so many brave men lost their lives. When the crisis came, the managing director or 'purser' resolved that he would not sell 'black tin' at a less price than sixty pounds per ton. Black tin is the metal that has undergone the stamping and the washing process to separate it from some of its rocky impurities. It has also had other matter burnt out of it, and is ready for the smelter's hands. The mine was then in the hands of a few well-to-do 'adventurers' who could afford to try the experiment. Accordingly, no tin was sold, and it was stored in great quantities in hutches. A wealthy banking and smelting firm advanced the necessary money for carrying on the mine on the security of the stored black tin. This policy was commenced in 1875; and in 1878 the price of pure tin had fallen to sixty pounds per ton, and the crude article to forty pounds. The debt at the bank was £24,000, and the interest of course considerable. Still the 'purser' held on, and no tin was disposed of; and in 1881 and 1882 the reward came. The market went up, and the shareholders were enabled to realise far higher prices than the minimum below which they had resolved not to sell.

JOHN UPCRAFT'S CRIME.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

WHEN the sense of stupefaction passed away, Upcraft became aware of a figure bending over the railing at the foot of his bed and peering inquisitively into his face. 'It's you, is it?' said the figure.

If he had needed any confirmation as to whose step he had heard or as to what manner of man stood there, he had gained it now. As the man spoke, he raised his shaggy eyebrows, feigning, as it seemed to Upcraft, the utmost surprise. He was enveloped in a thick gray dressing-gown. The light from the fire flickered upon it, and upon the old and cunning face of Mr Bryce.

At this moment Jess opened her eyes; she looked in bewilderment round the room.

'So this is the man you're nursing, is it?' said her father. 'It's just as well that I took it into my head to have a look at you, eh?'

Jess made no answer; but she kept a watchful look on his face.

Mr Bryce rose from his leaning posture at the foot of the bed and crossed over to the fire, where he stood very much in the attitude in which Jess had seen him in the library a few hours ago. He stretched out his hands to warm them while glancing at Upcraft over his shoulder. 'Now listen to me,' said he, with a crafty look out of the corner of his eye, 'for I'm going to speak plainly! Let me advise you to weigh every word before you answer me. Shall I go on?'

'Go on,' said Upcraft; 'I'm listening.'

'In the first place,' said Mr Bryce, 'I'll ask you a question. Do you still realise that you are a convict at large? Answer me that!'

There came a look of anger into Upcraft's eyes: Jess felt the hand she had given him pressed convulsively; but he made no answer.

'It's fortunate,' Mr Bryce went on, with a nod of satisfaction, 'that no one here—at Thurrock Hall—knows anything about you. You are Miss Jessie's patient—that's all. Your identity is known to no one, except us three who are here together.'

Upcraft looked into Jessie's face. 'Is that true?'

Jess answered: 'Colonel Woodward knows who you are; no one else knows.'

Mr Bryce cast a meaning glance at his daughter. Then he said: 'Now, listen to what I have to propose.' He walked across the room and back again thoughtfully; then he resumed his attitude over the fire and looked with evident mistrust at Upcraft.

'Well?' said Upcraft, impatient at his hesitation; 'you have something to propose, you say. What is it?'

'I was only wondering,' and there was still mistrust in Mr Bryce's manner, 'whether, as a medical man, it would not be wiser to put off my talk for a few days. I don't want to alarm you,' said he; 'but you've a feverish look in your eye which I don't quite like.'

'You are too considerate,' said Upcraft, in a tone of irony.

'Not at all,' said Mr Bryce.

'Then say what you have to say,' said Upcraft; 'now or never.'

'Very well,' was Mr Bryce's reply. 'You have had your warning. I'll only advise you, as a professional man, not to let anything I may say cause you undue excitement. The matter is a very simple one. You very naturally desire, under existing circumstances, to keep your presence here unknown—unsuspected.'

'I did not say so,' said Upcraft.

'Tut,' said Mr Bryce, with a wave of the hand. 'It's understood, then—it's understood.'

Upcraft offered no comment. He clasped his hands behind his head and looked fixedly at Mr Bryce. Jess stood at the bedside between the two, frequently looking from one face to the other.

'When I reminded you, rather bluntly just now,' Mr Bryce resumed, 'that you were a convict at large—an outlaw—I had a distinct motive for doing so. I wanted you clearly to understand your position. One word from Colonel Woodward, or from me, would send you back to the prison from which you escaped three years ago.'

An odd smile passed over Upcraft's face at

these words. But Jess looked with abject dread at her father.

'But you won't give him up, will you?' said she. 'You won't betray him now?'

'Why, no—no,' said Mr Bryce in his most plausible tone—not if he agrees to my conditions.'

'Conditions?' said Upercraft, closing his eyes for a moment, as if the better to comprehend. 'What may they be?'

'Simply that you give up all thought of holding my daughter to her engagement: that you lose no time, when restored to health, in making arrangements to quit the country for once and all: that you give your promise, in a word—having been provided with money to live abroad—never to show your face again!'

'And if I refuse?' said Upercraft, opening his eyes and looking searchingly at Mr Bryce.

'Those are my conditions.—If you refuse,' Mr Bryce resumed, 'I shall report you at headquarters; and before a week is out, you will find the handcuffs on your wrists again, and a prison van waiting for you without!'

Upercraft could control himself no longer. 'You coward!' said he, leaping up from his pillows as if he had some thought of springing at Mr Bryce's throat. 'By what right do you presume to dictate terms to me? Your step along the footway through the wood still rings in my ear. Look to your own wrists! For I may yet be tempted, if goaded much further, to put Woodward on the track of the man who tried to murder me in Thurrock Wood!'

At this fierce and unexpected retort, Mr Bryce was completely dumfounded, but only for a moment. He quickly recovered himself, and turning to Jess with a hypocritical air of concern, inquired: 'Does he often rave like this?'

Jess looked thoroughly amazed. If there was any reason in Upercraft's utterance—if it were not a mere feverish outburst of meaningless passion—her father was the direct cause of this grave calamity. As the words sank into Jessie's heart, their truth became clearly manifest; they seized upon her imagination with irresistible force; and the whole scene of the attempted crime passed before her eyes. Her father had quitted the cottage soon after Upercraft's departure. He had crossed the fields, and had taken the footway through the wood to Great Thurrock Station. There he had seen Upercraft, followed him, and struck him down. She looked at Upercraft as if for some further confirmation. But he had fallen back upon his pillows, and lay there so pale and motionless that Jess became seriously alarmed.

Mr Bryce stepped forward and more closely scrutinised Upercraft's face. 'Out of danger, eh? I don't know so much about that! He's still delirious. Why, my dear,' said he, 'why didn't you give me a hint? You heard me warn him, didn't you? He's in a high fever. I should give him a cooling draught at once.—Good-night!'

Having uttered these words in a soothing, professional tone, while bending over the patient, Mr Bryce went out, treading softly down the passage, as if unconsciously trying to disguise the sound of his own footstep.

Towards nightfall on the following day, while Woodward was alone in the library, a visitor was

announced. He was a dark man with a closely shaven face; and there was a sporting cut to his dress which added to his general appearance of wide-awakefulness.

Woodward received him with the eager question: 'Any news?'

The man nodded. He was a detective whom Woodward was employing to search into the matter of the attempted murder of John Upercraft.

'Is Mr Bryce here?'

'No,' said Woodward.

'At home?'

'Yes; he went home this morning.'

'I've business with him.—My dogcart is outside,' said the man. 'Will you drive over with me? I'm on the track at last.'

'Can Mr Bryce help you?' said Woodward, with surprise.

'Nobody better!' said the detective.

Woodward took his seat in the dogcart at the detective's side, and they flew along over the melting snow in the growing dusk of evening.

Mr Bryce, who sat in his easy-chair, grasped the arms vigorously as the two men were shown in. He looked startled. There was a wine-glass and an empty bottle of port on the table at his side; and the effects of the wine were apparent in his flushed face and thick utterance.

'Woodward?' said he. 'And who's your friend?'

'Sharp,' said the man, 'from Scotland Yard. I've a warrant, Mr Bryce, for your arrest on suspicion of being concerned in that affair in Thurrock Wood. May I trouble you?'

Mr Bryce, still grasping the armchair, rose up and stood erect before his visitors. The detective stepped forward and held out a pair of handcuffs invitingly.

A stifled oath—a gasp for breath—and Mr Bryce, reeling forward, clutched at his own throat, as though wrestling with some demon, and then fell in a heap, face downward, in front of the hearth. They lifted him back into his chair. They looked at each other. After a pause, the detective said: 'There's no need for handcuffs here.'

For some days Upercraft's relapse caused grave anxiety; but he slowly regained strength; and, strangely enough, as Jess remarked, he never spoke one word to her that showed any distinct recollection of her father's midnight visit.

One bright spring day, Jess had wheeled Upercraft's chair to the open window. She was more a companion to him now than a nurse; and as the need of her as a nurse diminished, she became conscious of a growing change in John Upercraft which seriously perplexed her. He seemed to be drifting from her. 'I sha'n't trouble you much longer,' said he. 'I'm mending fast. In a few days I shall be well enough to quit Thurrock Hall.'

'Trouble, John? You are a trouble to no one.'

'Not even to Woodward?'

'No. It is ungenerous to think so,' said Jess. 'There is nobody more hospitable in the whole county!'

'You know best,' said Upercraft.

'John! How strange you are,' said Jess. 'What is in your thoughts?'

'I was thinking about myself, I'm afraid,' said he. 'What is to become of me? What have I to live for now?'

'I don't know,' said Jess archly, 'unless it's for me.'

'For you, Jess?' said Upercraft, with surprise. 'Aren't you going to marry Woodward?'

'I? You must be dreaming.'

Upercraft's face brightened. 'How could I have ever had a doubt? Why, Jess, this is the second time you have saved my life! If I had needed any proof—if in all these years you had ever given me the slightest cause to doubt you—your devotion to me during these terrible days, while I was lingering between life and death, should have convinced me that I had no right to think that your love was changed!'

The ice was broken. They were lovers once more. And now he told her what had passed between him and her father on that misty afternoon at the cottage in the marshlands, and how he had subsequently entered the bar-parlour at the 'Old Hulk,' where the gossips had coupled her name, as he thought, with Colonel Woodward's.

'It is possible,' said Jess; 'I have been much at the Hall. Miss Woodward is my friend. Her brother and I have been thrown together. I like him, and—and—'

And then she hesitated, and looked out upon the park, and thought of what had happened there in the snow-storm on that memorable afternoon. Then she related to Upercraft every detail of the scene.

They now spoke freely to each other of all that had happened during their three years of separation.

'After bidding you good-bye, Jess, on that dreadful night,' said Upercraft presently, 'I went abroad. After a number of adventures, of which I will tell you another time, I reached "Frisco." There I got work in a silver mine, and began to make money.'

'But why,' said Jess, 'why did you never write?'

'I feared my letters would be intercepted,' said Upercraft. 'I could not trust your father. I thought of coming home and seeing you, and returning to the States. But I never could make up my mind. But at last something happened which decided me.'

'What was that?'

'It happened at a grog-shop. Some men were gambling at dice. A quarrel arose. Words led to blows. A pistol-shot was heard, and one of the gamblers fell. I ran to lift him from the ground, and instantly recognised him. He was an old fellow-clerk in the London house. He was seriously wounded, and lived only a few days. Before he died, he wrote a confession, which was signed and duly attested. It was about that forgery: and it is now in the hands of my lawyer. It sets forth how some half-dozen drafts, which I had been accused of having forged, were forged by him. He had put one of them among my papers.'

'How cowardly!'

'Yes,' said Upercraft. 'When he heard of my escape from prison, the little courage he had utterly failed him. He was in mortal dread that I should make my appearance at the office

and boldly accuse him of the crime. He was conscience-stricken, and he lived in fear and trembling. At last he left England, and wandered from one country to another, and so came across the man he least desired to meet.'

'It was fated; wasn't it?'

For a while they were silent. Then Upercraft said: 'I was on my way to the Hall, after quitting the "Old Hulk"—resolved to visit Woodward, and do my utmost to induce him to give you up—when I met with that trouble in Thurrock Wood. You know the rest.'

Upercraft was re-established as head-clerk in the house from which he had been dismissed as a criminal more than three years before. Soon afterwards, Jessie became his wife.

Woodward travelled for a while. Then he came home, and settled down with his sister at Thurrock Hall. Jim, when big enough, was taken on as under-gardener; and Mrs Gilkes found a home at one of the park lodges. She never observed anything queer about her son, when the signal-gun went booming over the marshlands on any subsequent occasion; and so she came to conclude that Jim had 'grown out of it' at last.

THE BRITISH SOLDIER AND HIS CHAPLAIN.

It is a matter for congratulation surely that the British nation, while it cares for the physical and material needs of its soldier-sons, does not forget that they have spiritual needs also: it credits them with something more than mere physical frames to be kept strong and in good fighting trim. 'Tommy Atkins,' while he has a strong arm to strike for his country, has a heart also to feel and sympathise. He is a man, not a machine; and has necessities other than those which can be met by the daily food-rations. And so England, recognising these deeper needs of her brave lads—needs which may not be always apparent on the outside, but which are none the less real—has her 'Chaplains' Department' in connection with the army. And there are never wanting men who in this path of duty are proud to go forth under her standard, not to fight, unless, indeed, some stern necessity should arise—then they can—but rather to enhearten the men, and to keep them in touch with that higher duty which embraces and covers all the lesser but essential duties of their soldier-life. The men are none the less unshaken in discipline and plucky in fight because of their Sunday morning parade service, or the quiet word of comfort and friendly sympathy spoken in the hospital or the barrack-room; or the knowledge that should they die in the service, words of Christian prayer will be reverently spoken by their graveside, even though they be laid away to rest in some far-off land, or on the red field of strife itself.

Through many long years it was my happy lot to be engaged in this work at home and abroad, both in the piping times of peace and amid the more stirring episodes of the actual battlefield. I say advisedly it is a happy work, for no clergyman or minister need wish for a more grateful and responsive constituency among whom to toil

than the lads of the British army. They are often misunderstood; sometimes, indeed—and I say it with shame and indignation—looked down upon and scorned; but I testify—and so will many another who has lived among soldiers and *knows* them—that some of the grandest qualities which go to make a noble character in man I have seen exemplified over and over again in the British soldier. Take him all round, he is a better man than those of his own station in civil life. Perhaps he ought to be, because the army is a great school of discipline, where many a man who through sheer weakness of character would very probably drift into evil ways in civil life, just gets that stiffening and backing up which he needs to keep him straight, and ultimately to turn him into a very decent fellow. Whereas, if he be utterly and irretrievably bad, he is soon ignominiously kicked out of the army, as he would be from any other decent society.

With regard to the work of the chaplains, the military authorities recognise four 'religious parties' in the army—Church of England, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and Wesleyan; and every soldier when he enlists is required to declare his 'religious persuasion,' he being 'at full liberty to attend the worship of Almighty God according to the forms prescribed by his own religion.' There are about eighty commissioned chaplains belonging to the first three parties: the Wesleyans, while having their corps of chaplains, and serving both at home and in campaigns, preferring not to accept commissions. This somewhat militates against the efficiency of their earnest and otherwise fully recognised work in the army; and it is perhaps regrettable that they do not choose to stand on the same platform as their co-workers. These commissioned chaplains are divided into four classes, according to their seniority, ranking respectively as Colonels, Lieutenant-colonels, Majors, and Captains; and headed by a Chaplain General—at present Dr Edghill—who is at the War Office. The pay of a military chaplain is not great, ranging from 10s. to £1, 2s. 6d. a day; and he retires on pension when he has completed twenty years' service; except under special circumstances, when the term of service may be prolonged. He is not entitled to special fees for the performance of any duty whatever for officers and men, such as furnishing copies of certificates of baptism, marriage, or burial. His duties embrace the conduct of the parade and voluntary services in the garrison church on Sunday morning and evening respectively; the regular visiting of the sick in hospital, and of the soldiers' families in the married quarters; and the weekly religious instruction of the children and drummer-boys. These, however, are the barest lines of his duty. There are a thousand other ways by which, if a chaplain would do his work effectively, he must come into sympathetic touch with the men. No rules or regulations can make a chaplain really efficient if it be not born in him from the first. There are special instincts, intuitions, and natural powers which are essential, and which, if he have them not, he had better relinquish the work at once and for ever. I have known a chaplain who regarded the officers' mess as an unholy place, and its inmates as men to be avoided rather than

influenced; and others who looked upon the men in the ranks as beneath any kindly notice beyond what bare duty demanded. Such men are failures, and worse. On the other hand, the chaplain who is brotherly and sympathetic in the hospital, who has a cheery word for the men when he looks in upon them in the barrack-room, and who comports himself as a manly Christian gentleman in the officers' mess, is the success. The poor sick lads look eagerly for his coming, the men in the rooms hail his presence, and the officers welcome and respect him. He it is to whom the men will tell the sad secrets which perhaps have long been locked up in their own breasts; and oftentimes he is privileged to be the happy instrument of effecting a reconciliation between the runaway lad and the anxious parents, who probably know not the whereabouts of their wandering boy.

The soldier is very quick to detect the right man—the man who is his friend and well-wisher; and for him he will do anything. But woe betide the one whose ministrations he resents! There are many little ways in which he can show it without bringing himself within the reach of reprimand. The remarkable restlessness at parade service, the sudden and strange somnolence which invariably seizes the men in hospital when such a chaplain crosses the threshold, and the scantily attended voluntary service, are all indications of 'Tommy's' displeasure. Indeed, I heard of one acting-chaplain in a large garrison town who with remarkable discretion told his military congregation that soldiers were simply 'paid cut-throats and robbers.' The sergeants of the particular regiment quartered there met together, and sturdily refused ever to hear that man again; and what is more, their commanding officer did not compel them to do so.

To a man of the right stamp, the work of a military chaplain is full of happiness and encouragement, delightful alike in its experiences and in its after-memories.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WHEN, sixty years ago, George Stephenson prophesied that his newly-invented iron horse would achieve a speed of a mile in three minutes, his words were regarded with incredulity. Possibly the great inventor himself would have been incredulous if he had been told that the locomotive engine would be gradually improved until the three minutes in which a mile could be covered would be reduced to thirty-two seconds. This marvellous speed was actually attained lately on the New York Central Railway, and for some distance a speed almost as great was maintained. One can hardly realise what such velocity means; for it is faster travelling than anything short of a projectile from a gun that we are acquainted with; faster than the 'wings of the wind,' or the flight of the swiftest bird. In every second of its progress along the rails, the American engine while maintaining the speed stated above covered a distance of one hundred and sixty-five

feet. It is very doubtful if a higher speed than this is possible, for the resistance of the air is a very important factor.

The lectures by Professor Dewar on the Atmosphere and Liquid Air, which have aroused so much interest at the Royal Institution, and are believed to be among the most remarkable ever delivered in that historic theatre, came to a conclusion with an experiment which has never before been performed—namely, the synthesis of air. Every schoolboy knows how to *analyse* the air in a rough and ready manner by burning the oxygen and leaving the nitrogen. Professor Dewar mixed together fluid nitrogen and fluid oxygen in the proportions necessary—about four to one—to constitute the air we breathe. When these lectures are published, they will be read with avidity by the scientific men of all countries.

Fish is notoriously the most perishable form of food, and the kind which for that reason is most unpalatable when not perfectly fresh. It therefore seems to be a marvellous achievement to deliver in London, in first-rate condition, a consignment of fish which is the produce of Australian waters. These fish were recently on view in the Victorian Court of the Imperial Institute; they are of a kind not met with in Britain, and were brought, together with a large quantity of fruit, by the screw steamer *Oceana* from Melbourne.

During the recent drought, an experiment was tried in South Lincolnshire which is worthy of imitation by those who are within reach of water. This was on the farm of Swineshead Abbey, which is intersected by one of the arterial fen drains. By aid of a powerful fire-engine, the water from this channel was pumped over the land in the form of fine spray at the rate of eighty tons per hour. The engine was fixed at a convenient centre, and flexible tubing several hundred feet in length carried the water from it over a large area. Many agriculturists visited the farm, and they pronounced the experiment a complete success. There are many farms situated near reservoirs, lakes, and rivers which, in times of drought, might be benefited at small expense in similar fashion.

A French paper publishes an interesting account of a new industry in Algeria which utilises the dwarf-palm of that country, a tree which hitherto has proved to be one of the chief obstacles to clearing the land, for it is profuse in its growth, has most tenacious and wide-spreading roots, and is most difficult of eradication. Various uses are now made of this tree, but the principal is the extraction of the fibres which are found in the leaves and stems. The industry is of twofold benefit to Algeria, for it clears the land of the obstructive tree, and employs a large amount of Arab labour at the numerous factories which have arisen during the past few years. The leaves are first of all plucked, then sorted by women and

children, and lastly combed in a rough form of carding-machine, the principal part of which is a rapidly revolving drum with nails fixed upon it. With this rough appliance a man is able to card upwards of one thousand pounds of leaves per day. The fibre is subsequently curled or twisted, and can then be used for stuffing chairs, couches, and other articles of furniture.

The French scientific journal, 'La Nature,' recently published an article, interesting more especially to military men, which gave details of the method of crossing rivers by means of leathern bottles. The said bottles are made by utilising the hides of cattle which have been necessarily slaughtered to feed the soldiers; and in order to turn them to account the animals must be skinned in such a way as to leave the hide as whole as possible. The holes representing the places of the legs and neck are then tied up, and the skin, blown full of air, possesses sufficient buoyancy to support two men in the water. In practice these huge air-bottles are fastened below wooden rafts, which can be rapidly put together or taken to pieces.

Among the many methods of utilising waste products may be mentioned the employment of sawdust in making building-bricks. The sawdust must be dried, and all coarse particles and chips separated from it, after which it is mixed in the following proportions: Two bushels of sawdust, one of cement, and five of sharp sand. When these ingredients have been well mixed in a dry state, two bushels of slaked lime are added, and the whole incorporated and pressed into moulds. The product is said to be satisfactory and cheap.

A curious result of issuing coin of much less intrinsic value than the sum which it represents has occurred in the United States, where for some time the dollar has only contained sixty cents-worth of silver. Some astute counterfeiters have made a quantity of dollars containing the same amount of silver as those issued by the Mint, and from the latter they cannot possibly be distinguished. The question thus arises whether a Government which issues coins of a fictitious value can prosecute individuals for doing precisely the same thing.

In a paper recently read by Mr John Ritchie of Edinburgh, before the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, on the 'Utilisation of Water for Power,' the most modern appliances for obtaining power from water were fully described, including those more especially intended for electric lighting. The lecturer has carried out several installations of this character, in one case utilising a head of water of six hundred and fifty feet, and obtaining from it thirty-five horse-power by driving the whole of the water through a six-inch riveted steel pipe. In the course of his remarks, he pointed out what an enormous amount of power was at present running to waste, which might be applied to the benefit of landowners and manufacturers.

It is interesting to observe that both water and wind power are now receiving renewed attention at the hands of engineers. All over our country there are watermills and windmills which have been abandoned, and are going to decay. Artists know where to find them, and are the first to deplore the fact that improved methods of milling corn have rendered these picturesque places

obsolete. But, as we have just seen, water is once more being regarded as a valuable source of energy, but with the dynamo-machine yoked to it as a distributor. As to wind-power—improved windmills have a department all to themselves at the Columbian World's Fair, and although they are not quite so picturesque in appearance as their four-sailed prototypes, they are capable of much more effective work.

A new method of preventing forgery of bank-notes and other documents has been suggested by a German doctor. He states that certain colouring matters can be so prepared and combined, that when paper is dipped into the mixture each tint will penetrate the fibre at different speeds, the result being that the paper will assume a streaked appearance, each layer absorbing a different colour. The exact means by which this result can be brought about are not specified; but it is stated that the plan is practicable, and that it is impossible to imitate the effect produced without knowing precisely how the mixture of colours was made.

An interesting account of the way in which olive oil is produced in Sicily is given by the United States consul at Catania. The olive-tree grows equally well in the valleys and on the mountain sides; but those on the lower ground furnish an oil which is richer, and can be stored for a longer time without deterioration. The grinding and pressing of the olives are performed in a very primitive fashion. First, the olives are placed on a circular platform of masonry about seven feet in diameter, upon which a heavy mill-stone is turned by means of a pole to which a donkey is attached. While the stone revolves, a man is constantly engaged in turning the pulped olives over and over with a spade. In half an hour about one hundred kilogrammes will have been pulped in this way, when the mass is put in soft rush-baskets, which are piled in a heap in the press—an arrangement with a heavy wooden screw, which is worked by six men. About half the oil is expressed in this fashion, the rest being extracted by subsequent operations. The fresh oil is green in colour, and is placed in earthen jars for eight days to settle and clarify. It is then ready for use.

Tobacco has generally been regarded, and has been largely used, as an insecticide. It therefore comes as a surprise to learn from a recent issue of 'Indian Museum Notes' that there is at least one insect which thrives on the fragrant weed, and is so appreciative of a good cheroot as to render that delicacy useless for human consumption. This, 'the cheroot weevil,' or '*Lasioderma testaceum*,' is a little beetle which lays its eggs on the leaf, the said eggs afterwards hatching out into white hairy grubs, which cut their way out of the cheroot, and leave tiny tunnels, which reveal their work and spoil the cigar. The greatest care is necessary in making the cheroots that the tobacco leaves should be free from contamination, for the proposal to subject them after manufacture to a heat of ninety degrees would, while destroying the eggs, spoil the flavour of the tobacco. The same insect will attack stored rice, opium, and other vegetable substances.

An effective method of closing bottles of milk air-tight is credited to a French inventor. The fastening consists of a disc of good india-rubber,

with a nipple or finger which fits the neck of the bottle, projecting from its centre. The bottle of milk is placed in a water-bath until it boils, when it is removed from the water, and the india-rubber stopper inserted. As the bottle cools, a partial vacuum is created inside the bottle, and the stopper is sucked into the neck, preventing all access of air. A metallic cover completes the operation.

Close by the North-western Railway line at Harrow may be seen a circular wooden platform about two hundred feet in diameter, standing upon which is an upright frame fitted with what seem to be Venetian blind slats. This is Mr H. Phillips's Flying Machine, the result of many years' careful experiments with a view to solve the problem of aerial navigation. Many flying machines have been designed with large plane surfaces to rise in the air on the kite principle. Mr Phillips has reduced these surfaces until they resemble, as we have said, the laths of a Venetian blind. The carriage, or frame, tethered to a central post, is driven around the track by a light but powerful steam-engine, which works an air-propeller. A high rate of speed has been attained, and the machine lifts at its rear end about three feet from the ground. The experiment is a promising one, for the machine does more than any of its predecessors; but as yet the problem of flying cannot be said to be solved.

Edison's phonograph has not yet been placed within reach of the public, although we occasionally hear of these instruments being sold at a somewhat extravagant price. It is stated by an American paper that the mixing of the composition for the waxen cylinders is a secret process only known to, and performed by one man.

Teachers of astronomy know well how difficult it is by diagrams or any other means to demonstrate to their pupils the movement of the earth and its satellite with respect to the sun, and they often have to content themselves with such homely appliances as an orange, a knitting-needle, and a candle. Mr J. B. Fisher, of North Parade, Deal, has earned the gratitude of instructors by designing a very beautiful contrivance, which he has named the Volvorb, which is small enough to stand at the end of a schoolroom table, and yet large enough for demonstration before a large class of pupils. The sun is represented by a gilt ball, which can, if desired, be replaced by a paraffin lamp; and the earth moves around it in such a way as to clearly illustrate the phenomena of the seasons with their varying lengths of day and night. Round the earth there moves, when required, a little satellite, by which can be shown the phases and eclipses of the moon. The contrivance works perfectly, and by very simple means, while the mechanism is of such originality as to justify the protection of a patent.

The Select Committee of the House of Commons which is making inquiry into the state of our Sea Fisheries is gathering evidence of a very important and interesting nature. Professor Ray Lankester recommends that our coasts should be thoroughly surveyed, so that the movements and habits of the fish inhabiting them can be better studied; and he asserts that such a survey might be made to pay well from a commercial point of view, for new fishing-grounds would be discovered. He suggests that to carry out this work the

present Government grant to the Marine Biological Association, which amounts to only one thousand pounds per annum, should be trebled, and a further sum of six thousand pounds should be granted for a deep-sea vessel. Dr Günther is in favour of the establishment of hatcheries for the cultivation of sea-fish; and other witnesses have testified to the gradual depletion of the North Sea fisheries owing to the baneful practice of netting immature fish.

A member of the Government Indian Service in Arizona has recently published an account of the manner in which the Apaches prepare their arrow-poison, and he states that although there is no longer any need for the tribe to possess themselves of such warlike material, the process is gone through year after year as a matter of tribal tradition. The recipe for this poison would almost commend itself to the witches in 'Macbeth,' although it is somewhat simpler than the brew which they compounded. The Apache uses only three materials—namely, the heads of about a dozen rattlesnakes, a pint of poisonous red ants, and water. These he mixes together, and places in an earthen vessel, which he lutes with moist earth, previous to putting it into a fierce fire for twenty-four hours. At the end of this time the concoction assumes the appearance of a dark-brown paste, and is ready for smearing upon arrows. So deadly is the poison, that a prick with such a weapon will kill its victim in twenty minutes.

Once more an old scheme for making Paris into a seaport by means of a ship canal has been brought forward; and it is said that nearly half of the total cost, which is estimated at six millions sterling, has already been provided for. The suggestion is that the present water-way between Havre and Rouen should be extended to Paris, so as to enable sea-going vessels to come direct to the French capital. The total length of the water-way would be a hundred and fifteen miles, its depth about twenty-two feet, with an average width of a hundred and fourteen feet. The canal would require only four locks, and in other respects its construction would present no unusual difficulties.

The latest proposal for improved prison construction is that the cell-walls should be formed of thin steel pipes charged with water, so that the slightest puncture would reduce the pressure and cause an electric alarm to sound. Such a method of construction would, we think, be wholly unnecessary. Prisoners cannot escape from modern prisons of the ordinary pattern except with the connivance of their jailers. The days of Jack Sheppard are past.

A terror to dishonest milk-dealers has been contrived by Mr W. Belgrove of 462 Harrow Road, London. It consists of a glass jug holding one pint, with certain engraved lines upon its surface. In the first place it acts as a simple fluid measure, but its other duty is a more important one. Just below the line which marks the pint measurement, and also below that marking half a pint, there are three marks, the top one bearing the word 'Average;' the second one, 'Good;' and the lowest one, 'Very good.' These words are intended to denote the thickness of the layer of cream which will rise to the surface of the milk after a few hours' rest, and are of course

a direct test of quality. The quantity of cream in certain specimens of London milk which we have seen was so small that it would altogether defy measurement.

RUSSIAN RIDDLES.

To begin with, the Slavonic conundrum is not by any means a thing to be laughed at. No light and airy trifle, it entirely lacks the frivolity—some might say the futility—of the British specimen. Luckily for this generation, the tyranny of the English riddle is overpast. Familiarity with such a conversational kill-joy has long been reckoned the reverse of a social accomplishment. Looking, however, at the Russian variety, we at once discover that it is 'no fool,' to use an Americanism. The Muscovite quip is a stern and solid aboriginal fact. Racy of the soil, each riddle contains at least one buried myth and two mummified figures of speech. To unearth and revivify these dry bones requires the philosophic touch of a Max Müller or a Renan, tempered with the Shakespearean hilarity of a First Grave-digger.

Many of these enigmas or riddles are annually trotted out by the old crones as they gossip round the stove during the long Russian winter evenings. When the days of the Christmas festivities come round, the 'chestnut' is an unfailing source of joy. The riddle pure and simple bears a strong likeness in style to the famous riddle with which Samson defeated the thirty men of Timnath. It shows traces of a rude poetic instinct, and often, it must be added, is highly far-fetched. Ralston, in his 'Songs of the Russian People,' quotes a few that bear more immediately on his subject of folklore. Some of them are eminently calculated to tax the intellectual powers of the benighted peasant, were it not for the fact that the Russian peasantry have a special taste for figurative expression. Thus, such a phrase as 'The red cock has crowed' is the regular euphemism for the only too common village conflagration. 'To kill the worm,' in plain English, is to have a drink. Of course, such metaphors abound in the slang of all nations. They seem, at any rate, especially to flourish in the land which the rustic still shares with the house-demon and the Will-o'-the-wisp—where the mill-sprite and the water-nymphs have not yet resigned their dominion over the streams, nor lost their power to torment. As Byëlinski wrote to Gogol, the Slavonic lower classes are still pagans at heart, with superstitions for religion; and their proverbs and enigmas bear eloquent testimony to the fact. In common with the powers of Nature, such humble domestic objects as the shovel, the broom, and the sieve enjoy the honour of personification, and almost attain to the rank of fetiches. Thus, the oven-fork is disguised in a riddle as an ox with a hayrick on his horns and with his tail in a woman's hands. Soaring into more poetic regions, we find that considerable demands are made upon our guessing powers. It needs some ingenuity to recognise the morning dew under the figure of a maiden's keys, disregarded by the moon, but picked up by the sun. Another popular enigma runs thus: 'A white ox has

restored the world, which a black cow has overthrown.' This is, perhaps, not the most obvious way possible of saying that day succeeds night. The statement that 'There are letters on blue satin which neither learned nor unlearned can read,' is only a periphrastic allusion to the stars in the sky.

Many similar riddles were collected by the Russian ethnologist Khudyakov some thirty years ago. The present writer has jotted down in his note-book a few others derived from various sources. It will be noticed that most of the enigmas are put in the form of simple assertions, and are not, like the English riddles, interrogative. For instance, 'I went down the street, I came to two forked roads, and I walked along them both at the same time.' This apparent impossibility is solved every morning by the possessor of a pair of trousers. Compare the Mexican conundrum, 'What is it we enter by three ways and leave by one?' Answer, a shirt. The two following resemble each other: 'I am blind, but show others the way; deaf and dumb, but know how to count.' 'It has neither eyes nor ears, yet it leads the blind.' A milestone and a walking-stick are respectively implied. 'It flies silently and alights in silence; but when dead and rotten, it roars aloud.' 'People pray for me, and long for my coming; but directly I appear, they hide themselves.' The first is snow; the second, rain. Here is one which requires the commentator's farthing rushlight: 'There is a little dog which turns round and then lies still. It neither barks nor bites, but it keeps you out of the house.' The answer is, a lock. 'A nine-legged bird, which faces the wind and flaps its wings, but cannot fly.' 'It lives without body, speaks without tongue; none ever saw, but all have heard me.' In other words, a windmill and an echo. In the latter connection, we are reminded of the Zulu 'sense-riddle,' quoted by Tylor, 'There's a thing that travels fast without legs or wings, and no cliff or river or wall can stop it'—that is, the voice. The following is calculated to puzzle even a sphinx: 'What walks on its head and on foot, and with boots on, yet barefoot, all at the same time?' The solution is, the hobnail in your boot.

Some common objects of the household and the farmyard are thus presented: 'I have four legs and feathers, but am neither beast nor bird.' 'There are four brothers under one hat.' 'If I eat grass, my teeth grow blunt; chewing stone, they grow sharp again.' 'Black, but no crow; horned, but not a bull; with six legs, but no hoofs—what am I?' 'Four brothers run side by side, but never catch one another up.' 'I was born twice over, but not christened—a famous singer, yet over my corpse they chant no dirge.' 'A barrel of wine without staves or bottom.' 'I am not bird or beast, but sharp-nosed, thin, and shrill-voiced; killing me, you shed your own blood.' 'What walks upside down overhead?' The equivalents, taken in order, are as follows: A bed, the legs of a table, a sickle, a beetle, the wheels of a cart, a cock, an egg, a gnat, and a fly. Two miscellaneous queries may be added: 'Who are the two brothers that live on opposite sides of the road, yet never see each other?' 'What can't be caught, though you can see it close?' Your eyes and shadow, respectively.

Besides these somewhat tough and indigestible chestnuts, which serve as strong meat for senile wits obfuscated by 'vodka,' there is a more milk-and-water pabulum for the less robust intellect of the junior population. Such are the catches of an arithmetical kind. They are cosmopolitan and transparent; for example: 'A pack of wolves ran by; one was shot—how many remained?' 'If one man finds one kopeck, how much will three find there?' 'A peasant bought four scythes for four roubles; what will each come to?' 'There sat three cats, and each had two others opposite her; how many were there altogether?' The answers, I need hardly state, are, One, nothing, the ground, and three cats. Again: 'A flock of birds settled on a clump of trees: if they had perched in pairs, there would be one tree empty; if singly, there would be one tree too few—how many birds and how many trees?' A moment's consideration of this very elementary simultaneous equation will show that there are four birds and three trees. 'There was a party made up of a brother and sister, a man and his wife, and two brothers-in-law; how many were there in all?' Answer, three. Lastly, and to conclude a 'decrecendo' of bathos: 'Why does the dog bark and the cow lie down?' Because he can't talk, and she can't sit.

There only remains to add, that in Pskov and in other parts of Russia it is a peasant's custom not to allow the bridegroom to enter upon his honeymoon until he has answered correctly all the riddles propounded by the bride's companions. His lady-love would not be kept long in suspense, if the 'vivâ-voce' examination involves no more baffling ordeal than that contained in the last few questions I have adduced.

TO THE SEA.

Why art thou grieving evermore, O Sea?
Lo, through the long night-watches, I, awake,
Have heard thee cry. Hast thou a heart to break,
A human heart to suffer just as we?
What is the trouble that unceasingly
Maketh thy cry go up? Is it for sake
Of the dark secrets that the rivers take
From the great cities, bearing them to thee?
White faces thou hast rocked upon thy breast
With crooning song, like mother's lullaby;
And thou hast bound with sea-weed many a tress
Of hair most golden in its loveliness:
Ah, should it seem a marvel unto me
That thou shouldst grieve and grieve, and know not
rest?

MARY FURLONG.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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ROUND ABOUT THE MENDIPS.

THE Mendip Hills, in the northern part of the county of Somerset, extend in a south-easterly direction from the coast of the Bristol Channel at Uphill to the neighbourhood of Frome, some twenty-five miles in length; at their widest part they are six or seven miles broad. The main range consists of an undulating plateau, 'highly diversified with elevated rounded swells and gentle hollows; its declivities are picturesque, and occasionally skirted with woods.' The hills attain their highest elevation in Blackdown, near Blagdon, and Beacon Hill, some two miles from Shepton Mallet, both of which are more than ten hundred feet above the sea. Large tracts of the Mendips anciently constituted a royal hunting forest; now, the plateau is very largely brought under cultivation, though there are still thousands of acres of open moor and common.

The sides of the Mendips are grooved with many combes, rugged in their grandeur, or exquisite in their beauty. Rickford Combe is of the latter description. The road winds at the bottom of the combe, between woods composed of beech, oak, fir, and larch, which clothe the sides of the valley, the foliage affording exquisite harmonies of rich colour both in spring and autumn. Burrington Combe is stern and wild; here cliffs of limestone abut on the road; and there the stony slopes of the hills shelve down, leaving only the width of the roadway between them at the bottom. But the most remarkable of all the Mendip combes is the pass or gorge at Cheddar. The road winds in serpentine form up the defile for two miles. At the lower end, on one side, rise precipitous cliffs to the height of four hundred and eighty feet from the road. They are almost perpendicular, and are castellated, as though the work of cyclopean builders. In places, the lines of their rugged beauty are softened by festoons of ivy and other creepers; while numerous daws build their nests in the inaccessible rifts, their shrill cries breaking upon the impressive silence of the pass. On

the other side of the road is a series of rugged bluffs of rock and hill. Gradually shallowing as it ascends, the ravine opens on to the Mendip plateau.

It is evident to the most casual observer that water must have been an active agent in the formation of these combes. They are winding, or zigzag, just as a stream naturally carves out its course. Burrington Combe is a fine example of the zigzag. Once between the sides of the defile, the traveller can see only from point to point. The serrated sides of the combe come so close together that he feels as though he were in the grip of a gigantic rat-trap.

The Mendips abound with subterranean streams, which gush out in springs at different points at their foot. These streams are supplied by the drainage of the extensive Mendip plateau. Sometimes the water collected on the hills plunges into a swallow-hole. This is the case at Priddy, where the waters of the river Axe go down a swallow-hole, and pursue their subterranean course for two miles, until they gush from the cavern at Wookey Hole. The subterranean course of this stream has been demonstrated by throwing chopped straw and colouring matter into the swallow-hole at Priddy, which emerged at Wookey Hole. A tributary of the Axe, which flows through Cheddar, after running some distance on the hills in the open, is lost underground, until, lower down the valley, it emerges again to the light of day. Cinders have been thrown up by the natural springs at Wells, which were made miles away on the Mendips. By some means they have got into the subterranean streams which supply the Wells springs. Similarly at Banwell, where a copious spring of excellent water rises, discoloration of the water has been noticed after a heavy downpour of rain on the Mendips, when none has fallen in the village itself.

These facts afford a clue to the formation of the combes. Rain falling upon the hills has soaked into the ground, and found its way through the numerous fissures and joints of the

limestone, till it has formed a stream underground. Gradually the stream enlarges its channel by the mechanical action of the water, the friction of the silt and gravel carried with it, and the chemical action of the carbonic acid which is held largely in solution, and which rapidly dissolves the carbonate of the limestone, until the roof of its subterranean channel is so worn away and weakened that at last it falls in. Frost and snow weather the sides of the open water-course, and thus, as the result of quiet waterwork, through innumerable ages, an opencombe or hollow is made.

This process is now actually in operation at Wookey Hole. The valley in which the hamlet nestles insensibly narrows into a ravine, which is closed abruptly by a wall of rock two hundred feet high. At its base, the river Axe issues in full current. The ravine has been formed by the roof falling into the excavation made by the stream beneath. The rock which terminates it is undergoing denudation; and if the process continue long enough, the subterranean course of the Axe will be laid open to Priddy, and anothercombe will have been formed.

The Mendips are very rich in caves. Some of the stalactite caverns are among the most beautiful of their kind in the world, notably those at Cheddar. The Cheddar caves were accidentally discovered about fifty years ago. Half-a-dozen, or more, are united by apertures, and form a suite of underground apartments. Here, for ages past, nature has been at work, and her marvellous products, now exposed to the eye of man, excite wonder and astonishment in all beholders. The walls of these caves are in places covered with stalactite tapestry, the marble drapery of which hangs in folds, semi-transparent, rich in manifold colours and musical bells. Pendent stalactites hang like icicles from the roof, each tipped with a pellucid drop of water; while beneath, the stalagmite slowly grows from the congealing carbonate of lime held in solution by the falling drops. Here and there, a pool of clearest water, contained in a natural font, reflects the wonderful and fantastic creations of stalactite around.

Many other caves in the Mendips are most interesting to the archaeologist, such as the bone caverns at Hutton and Banwell; the hyena den at Wookey Hole, and Goatchurch and other caverns in Burrington Combe.

The most remarkable of the bone caves is that at Banwell. It consists of two large chambers: the upper contains thousands of bones of bison, horse, reindeer, &c., taken out of the red silt which originally filled it to the roof. This bone cavern is noticed by Dr Catcott in his treatise on the Deluge, published in 1761. The same writer describes the bones of the Hutton Cave as projecting from the sides, roof, and floor of the excavation in such quantities as to resemble the contents of a charnel-house. The immense quantities of animal remains these caves contained can best be realised by a visit to the Museum of the Somerset Archaeological Society at Taunton.

How were these vast numbers of bones deposited in the caves? Dr Buckland suggested—a suggestion endorsed by Professor Boyd Dawkins—that they were introduced from the surface by streams falling into swallow-holes, which have now, under the changed physical conditions,

ceased to flow. Animals not infrequently fall into swallow-holes and perish. Carnivorous beasts lurk for their prey at the places where they come to drink. The bones left by these means were carried by the stream at its ordinary height, or by floods, into the cavern. It is evident from the nearly perfect skulls of the bear and wolf which were discovered, that the cave was not used by the hyenas; for these animals are in the habit of cracking and splintering all but the most solid parts of the bones of their prey. Hyenas, however, are proved to have lived close by at the time, since their skulls and the gnawed antlers of reindeer have been found.

The most noteworthy of all the Mendip caves to the archaeologist is the hyena den at Wookey Hole, discovered in 1852, and explored in 1859 and subsequent years by Professor Boyd Dawkins and other savants.

In the exploration of the cave, evidence was found of the presence of prehistoric man. Implements of flint were discovered, and chert and bone arrow-heads, undoubtedly of human workmanship. As these flints were found under one of the old floors, it is evident that man was contemporary with the hyenas which frequented the cave and the animals on which they preyed. Many of the bones were gnawed and cracked into fine splinters, a proof that they had not been deposited by water, but left by the hyenas. The mere list of animals whose remains were found in this cave affords a vivid picture of the fauna inhabiting the Mendips at that remote age. There were bones of the hyena, cave-lion, cave-bear, wolf, fox, mammoth, rhinoceros, horse, urus, bison, Irish elk, and reindeer.

'All the facts taken together,' says Professor Dawkins, 'enable us to form a clear idea of the condition of things at the time the hyena den was inhabited. The hyenas were the normal occupants of the cave, and thither they brought their prey. We can realise these animals pursuing elephants and rhinoceroses along the slopes of the Mendips, till they scared them into the precipitous ravine, or watching until the strength of a disabled lion or bear ebbed away sufficiently to allow of its being overcome by their cowardly strength. Man appeared from time to time on the scene, a miserable savage, armed with bow and spear, not acquainted with metals, but defended from the cold by coats of skin. Sometimes he took possession of the den and drove out the hyenas; for it is impossible for both to have lived in the same cave at the same time. He kindled his fires at the entrance, to cook his food and to keep away the wild animals; then he went away, and the hyenas came to their old abode. While all this was taking place, there were floods from time to time, until eventually the cave was completely blocked up with their deposits.'

Goatchurch Cavern is the largest cave in the Mendips, and is situated in a ravine which opens into Burrington Combe. Its exploration was undertaken in 1864 by Professor Boyd Dawkins and others. The cave has several large chambers, which extend under the hill a considerable distance, and descend to a great depth. At the extremity, the explorer looks down upon a stream of water flowing underground. Another cave in thiscombe was opened in 1795, when from

forty to fifty human skeletons were found in a recess near the entrance, lying in regular order, their heads against the side of the cave, and their feet towards the centre. A later search discovered traces of charcoal, sheep-bones, flint knives, and a set of counters or dice, used by the Romans in games. Some have supposed it was a cave sepulchre.

Traces of prehistoric man are found not only in the caves but also on the hills. Numerous barrows are scattered in places, on Blackdown, at Priddy, and elsewhere. There are also several camps, which are alike in their general features, and are placed either on isolated hills, or on spurs which jut out from the main range with steep and almost inaccessible sides. These camps were evidently points of defence and observation. They overlooked the marshes, and commanded the ancient British paths, which have been traced in various directions.

The Romans have also left their traces on the Mendips. They occupied the camp on Beacon Hill, near which some of their roads intersect. The road to Old Sarum runs along the hills, and evidently descended to Axbridge, where there was a Roman station. The Romans worked the lead mines at Priddy and Charterhouse-on-Mendip, and appear to have carried the ore, via Axbridge, to the sea at Uphill, where they shipped it.

Fine panoramic views may be obtained from many a 'coign of vantage' on the hills. From Blackdown, the vale of Wrington is seen to great advantage, dotted with hamlets and homesteads, fertile and well wooded everywhere. Wrington itself is noted as the birthplace of John Locke, the philosopher, though the house in which he first saw the light is now demolished. Close to Wrington, peeping out from its woody knoll, Barley Wood may be seen, for many years the favourite residence of Hannah More. She and her four spinster sisters, varying in age from sixty-nine to eighty-eight, lie in a vault in Wrington Churchyard; and a tablet in the church perpetuates their memory.

North-west of Blackdown, at the end of a low range of hills which jut into the Bristol Channel, is Clevedon. Here Coleridge lived for some time, and the cottage in which he did most of his work is still shown. Clevedon Church contains the tomb of Hallam, the historian, and his son, whose memory is enshrined in 'In Memoriam.' The cold sea, bounded on the west by the hills of Glamorgan, still breaks on the pebbly shore, as described by Tennyson in his peerless lyric :

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O sea !
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

If the spectator changes his position to some eminence on the southern side of the hills, he gets a wide extended prospect of the rich moors of Somerset, which extend for miles, bounded by the Quantocks and the Blackdowns in the west and south-west. At no distant geological period these moors were sea-covered plains; but gradually the hills were worn down by denudation; the earthy deposits kept back the sea, and the rich alluvial stretches of country were eventually brought under cultivation. From these grassy plains the far-famed Cheddar cheese is now produced.

Occupying a picturesque situation at the foot of the Mendips is the ancient city of Wells, taking its name from three springs, which rise in the grounds of the episcopal palace, and afford copious supplies of pure water. The first church was founded at Wells in 704 by Ina, king of the West Saxons; and the present cathedral was commenced about the year 1180. The cathedral is one of the finest and purest examples of Early English in existence. It has a magnificent west front, with niches for three hundred statues, representing kings, saints, angels, principalities, and powers, the whole being supposed to illustrate that grand old hymn of the Christian church, the 'Te Deum laudamus.' Internally, the noble proportions of the building strike the visitor. It is rich in monuments; and in the northern transept is the famous astronomical clock constructed in the fourteenth century by Peter Lightfoot, a monk of Glastonbury, and brought to Wells after the dissolution of the monastery.

Macaulay describes the miners pouring from 'Mendips' sunless caves' on the alarm occasioned by the Spanish Armada. But the Mendips do not figure largely in national history. Nevertheless, to the lovers of nature there is an indescribable charm about the hills, and the sequestered nooks of quiet beauty which abound in them.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—'EVEN SO!'

ON the last night of the year, after dinner, Isabel sat with her Aged companion waiting. She sat with *The Sand-paper Review* in her lap, from which she had been reading a very grudging and supercilious criticism of Alan Ainsworth's play. A tall lamp was lighted, and diffused a soft, rich glow through its wide flounced shade of amber-coloured silk. Isabel was arrayed in a golden-tinted tea-gown of the material which ladies know as *crêpe*, and her abundant dark hair was arranged with a seductive negligence peculiarly her own. She wore no ornament but her beauty; her only jewels were her dark lustrous eyes. When she rose to go to the piano, the yielding material of her gown subtly suggested the lovely lines of her supple but superb figure; and her expression of meditative melancholy gave her more than a touch of imperial repose, which seemed to crown her with perfection. She had resolved to tell Alan that night of her engagement to her cousin George; and to soothe her mind and nerves, strung high with expectation, she now lighted the shaded candles, opened the piano, and sat down to play from Mendelssohn's 'Songs without Words.' From these she passed to the beautiful air which Mendelssohn wrote for Burns's exquisite song :

Oh, wert thou in the cauld blast
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry air,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee!

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She was thus occupied when Alan Ainsworth entered. She ceased at once, and rose to greet him, and the Aged companion discreetly slipped away. He looked much more festive than usual. He was attired in evening dress, which became his tall, lithe, broad-shouldered figure much better than it becomes most figures upon which it is seen: he had a white flower in his button-hole; his fair hair was somewhat rumpled; and there was a flush of excitement on his cheek, and a sparkle of excitement in his eye. When she saw him, she forgot all the pain and constraint of her last meeting with him.

'Why!' she exclaimed, 'you have shaved!' Yes; his moustache was gone; and there was revealed a strongly-curved lip, which suggested stern resolution and a something else which Isabel could not name.

'Yes,' laughed he freely; 'I have. I suppose it's the influence and the example of the men I've been mixing with lately.'

'Are you so easily influenced?' she said, still considering him.—'I don't like it!' she exclaimed, without thinking whether her liking or disliking it concerned Ainsworth.

'If you don't like it,' said he, 'I'll shave no more: I'll let it grow again. Shall I?'

Isabel felt that the air was becoming electrical, and she moved to the window to open it, saying: 'I think you had better.'

'Let me do that,' said he, following her. 'Though it will be an hour or two before the bells ring out the year.'

He opened the window, and stood by it with her. He looked at her; he had been looking at her since he had come in, but his look had been the only homage he paid to her appearance. Now, however, he spoke, saying: 'That is a very becoming gown you are wearing;' and he blushed when he had said it. 'I haven't seen it before.'

'Have you not?' said she, with a spice of mischief in her manner. 'Are you sure?'

'I am sure,' he answered. 'I know all the frocks and gowns I have ever seen you in, and all the frills and furbelows.'

That was a fuller answer than she had expected. But though disturbed, she was not displeased by it; and she began to perceive very plainly that it would be difficult to tell him of her engagement to Cousin George. Though the air still felt very electrical, she moved away from the window.

'Come and sit down,' said she, 'and tell me about your play. I have been reading what *The Sand-paper* critic has to say.' And she took up the paper and sat down; and Ainsworth sat down near her, with an evident consciousness of being near.

'Don't say "critic,"' said he; 'say "fault-finder."'

'I remember,' said Isabel with a smile, 'a certain critic in Lancashire, less than a year ago, who was a good deal troubled because his editor complained he was too much given to finding fault: he thought he was only a judicious critic.'

'Your thrust,' said he, with a laugh, 'is quite fair.'

'You told me in your note,' said she; 'but I don't quite understand why you suppressed your name; at least, I don't see that you had sufficient

reason for it, and especially for keeping the date of the production hid,' she added in a tone somewhat aggrieved.

'No; you don't understand that,' said he; 'but I could not put it all in the note I wrote you.'

He unrolled and rolled again the paper in his hands, and looked at her with an earnestness which made her at once fear what he might say, and yet long to hear it.

'When I began that play,' said he, looking at the paper, which he rolled and unrolled, 'months ago, I began it with a very definite object in view. I worked at it day after day and night after night with my eye on that object. Sometimes I should have liked very much to come and discuss it with you, but that did not suit my purpose: it had to be planned and written all by myself without suggestion or help from another. My immediate purpose was to make, if possible, a popular success.'

'Oh fie!' said Isabel, scarce knowing what she said. 'To seek a popular success is reckoned very unworthy—is it not?—and is very unfashionable among literary people!'

'I have no patience,' said Ainsworth very earnestly, 'with that shallow and absurd pretence! It is good and pleasant to know that very many, instead of very few, people like your work, if so be you do your work honestly. Why should it be thought less worthy to touch the hearts of the simple many than to tickle the heads of the knowing and cynical few? But it is not really so thought. It is all a pretence, made by some men to enable them to bear up against the disappointment of having their work received with indifference.'

'You think,' said Isabel, half consciously endeavouring to lengthen out his explanation, to postpone that end which alarmed while it fascinated her, 'that it is a case of "*Nolo episcopari*?" "I don't want to be a bishop: I wouldn't be a bishop if I could."'

'It is,' said he. 'I know men who are pining and fretting for a popular success, and who yet—or, perhaps, I should say "therefore"—are constantly sneering at what I heard one call the "humiliation" of popularity. Mind you, if a man sets himself to win popularity, and wins it by insincere work and false sentiment—and he does sometimes; for the big public is not well able to distinguish between the false and the true—then that man is to be denounced. I can honestly say,' he continued, 'that my work was not done insincerely. I set myself at the first to expound a subject that would appeal to many, and to express sentiments that would touch many, and then I wrote it all as sincerely and as well as I knew how.'

'I really believe you did, Mr Ainsworth,' said Isabel. 'I don't think you could be insincere. If you had written insincerely, I have no doubt you would have failed.'

'I *might* have failed!' said he, with the look of a man who has escaped a great peril. 'If I had failed—you would have heard of me no more! That was why I kept the thing from you!'

Again he looked at her earnestly and long. She returned his look, with something of dread in her eyes; and her breath began to come fast and thick, and her breast to heave under the soft folds

of her gown. Then he fell to rolling and unrolling the paper again.

'I think,' he continued in a low tone, 'that I *would* have failed—I was so despondent about it sometimes—I would have failed but that I had a great inducement and inspiration to go on.'

He paused; and she, in her dread of the pause, said lightly: 'What? The hope of fame and fortune?'

'Fame and fortune!' he exclaimed with a laugh. 'As for fortune—look here. I have just come from the treasury—the treasury of the theatre.' He took from his vest-pocket a folded paper, unfolded it, and handed it to her: it was a cheque for sixty pounds. 'That,' said he, with a shy touch of simple boyish glee, 'is for this week. I shall get a similar slip of paper every week. Is not that fortune?'

She was inclined to be offended, till she looked in his face and saw the boyish pleasure expressed on it; and then she understood that he had but impulsively set that before her, even as he would cast all his tribute at her feet.

'So,' said she, with a deliciously sharp sense of wilfully misunderstanding him, 'you have now got all you worked for?'

'Worked for?' he exclaimed. 'What? That?—That is but the sign or token of the real, the intangible, and I had in view! Don't you understand? Haven't you seen that I felt bound to become as much of your equal as I could be? Have you not seen that?—Now, now,' he said softly, letting the paper drop and taking her hand impulsively, 'I come to you!'

'Oh,' said she, closing her eyes, 'I must not let you speak like that! It is wrong! It is wrong!' A shudder as of horror passed over her, while she grasped his hand convulsively.

'What have I done?' he said. 'Have I been a fool?'

'Oh no! It is not you! It is myself! It is myself! I should not have listened to you! But it was so sweet to hear you!'

'Isabel! Tell me—tell me frankly! Do not shrink from telling me out of mistaken kindness! If it be that you do not love me—that you cannot!'

'Oh yes,' she cried—and gave him one wild look—'I love you, my dear! I love you!—No, no!' she cried; for he had kissed her hand, and now sought to embrace her, to kiss her lips. 'You must not do that!' She rose hurriedly, and paced to and fro, and he rose too. 'I should have told you at once!—I have sinned against Heaven! I have sinned against the light! But I did not understand!—I have been living in a vague dream! I have been as if walking in sleep; but one word from you would have waked me! Oh, my dear, my dear! why—why did you not say that one word to me?' She threw herself sobbing on his breast for one brief moment, while he strained her close. Her wild emotion tended to produce in him an intense calm. He strove to see and to think clearly.

'Tell me—tell me,' he murmured. 'Is it that something has happened while you have been down in Lancashire?'

With one great sob she released herself to answer him. 'How foolish and vain a creature a woman is!' she exclaimed. 'I thought I understood! I thought I was wise! I thought I knew

perfectly what I was doing! But I did not.—Yes; it was in Lancashire!'

'Your cousin,' said Alan, 'said last Whitsuntide that he would ask you again in a year!'

'Yes, yes,' she answered; 'you remember: you heard him, and then I saw your look!—It was in the conservatory.'

'And he has asked you?—though it is not a year?'

'Yes, yes,' she answered again. 'I was asleep! I was blind!'

'Isabel! My own! my life!' said he, seizing her hands, 'you must give him up!—You are not married to him?' he cried in sudden alarm.

'No, no!' she exclaimed with a shudder. 'Oh no! Not that!—Not yet!'

'Then you must give him up—you must, my sweetheart!—my love! You must!'

'How can I? He is not to blame. And he is happy in my promise. How can I destroy his happiness?'

'And how can you destroy your own happiness?—and mine? To go on with him will be to commit the sin unpardonable! It will be nothing, and will breed nothing, but misery! If you should marry him——! Do you think that a husband will not quickly find out when his wife does not love him?—A loveless marriage! A loveless life! A loveless family!—Into a loveless family—children with the cold affections of fish!—discord comes, and envy, and dislike! So fools and worldlings marry, and so the earth is filled with strife!—If you had loved him, and not me, I would have gone away, and said no word!—But can I see you put your feet on this horrible way that leads to living death, and not try to hold you back by every means in my power?—I love you!—you love me, and I will not let you go!' he said, as he drew her to him again, and she sank her head an instant on his breast. He kissed her hair.

'No, no, no!' she said, resuming possession of herself. 'This must not be, my dear.—I am losing myself!—I am forgetting! There is another thing that has troubled me—that has helped to lead me asleep—asleep and blind, my dear!—into this great sin!'

'What is that?'

She swept to the writing-table, unlocked it, took out Uncle Harry's Journal, and from its pocket drew the sheet of note-paper. 'You know this book!' said she. 'You have read some of it. It is Uncle Harry's last Journal.—Two or three weeks ago I found that in this pocket! Read it.'

He read it slowly—a first time, and a second; and then he looked at her. 'Your uncle says, "If you see your way;" did you see your way, my dear?'

'I thought I did!' said she. 'I was carried along fast—and blind!—I heard at that time that Uncle George might be ruined—by speculation!—I thought you were quite indifferent to me; and I resolved to give up everything—my money and myself both—to the family that had loved me and cared for me all my life long!'

'You were going to surrender both yourself and your wealth? Might not your wealth have been enough, my dear?'

'The money is not needed—there is no ruin threatening!—But the last time I saw you, you

were specially cold and reserved with me, and I could not endure it!"

"I was wrong, I see," said he; "I have been wrong all through!—Proud, conceited fool I have been to imagine it was necessary to make myself your equal in wealth!"

"Your error is nothing to mine!" she said. "But I did not understand, until it was done, what a horrible thing I was doing. I was asleep!—You had said no word to wake me!—And I believed that you were thinking we ought not even to be friends!"

"Oh, my Isabel!" cried he, taking her hands in his, "how dear and sweet you become when I see you can make a mistake too!—and a big one!"

"This is more than a mistake," said she, shaking her head.

"Now, my sweetheart!—my dear!" said he, "I refuse to take this tragically! This"—turning and fingering Uncle Harry's unfinished letter—"has no right to influence your decision. Will you be guided by my advice?"

"Yes," said she, with a touch of abandonment in her manner; "advise me, my dear—advise me!"

"Give the money up!—as you had intended.—I also have heard suspicions of dangerous speculation on your cousin's side—I suppose that is what you mean—and the money may be needed soon. Then say to your cousin: "I have no fortune! We thought I had!—Let our engagement cease! We both made it under a mistake!"

"No, no, Alan!" she cried. "Surely, surely, that would be mean! You do not understand him!—You are not just to him!—I believe he loves me truly!—That's the pain of it—the pain of giving him pain!—To wrong him, and then to insult him!—That would be to insult him!—No, no! I cannot do that!"

"The pain of it is," said he, "that some one must be pained."

"Then," said she, "I should be that person.—It is I who have done wrong!—I should suffer!—But then," she added, with a thin appealing smile, "you would suffer too, would you not?"

"So," said he, "out of your own mouth, my love, I can show you what you must do!—Which is better? That he should suffer pain for a little—from having lost a woman who did not love him—or that we both should suffer all our lives long?"

"Then," said she, sitting down wearily, "what about my dear uncle, and my aunt, and Phemy? I shall hurt and offend them."

"Do you know," said he, sitting down by her and speaking with decision, "what I shall do?—I shall tell your cousin that you do not love him—that you cannot marry him! And then, my dear—then I will carry you off, whether you will or no!"

"Yes, yes! my dear, my dear!" she cried, resting her head against his shoulder. "Take me away!—Make me go with you!—But, no, no!—That would look as if I ran away because I was afraid!—But help me! Decide for me, dear!—I thought I was strong, but I am not!—I have no decision—no will!—do not leave me to myself!"

"My sweet one, my dove!" he murmured, gently caressing her. "Who comes to me as to her haven!"—Shall I tell you what you must do

first? Get rid of that money!—I hate it!—It has come between us since ever it appeared!—Get rid of it!—Make your uncle take it!—One thing at a time. Will you try to do that, my sweet?"

"I will, my dear!"

"So let us say no more about it now. I will come in to-morrow—shall I?—to-night you should rest. Your nerves have been too much tried."

"Do not go yet," she murmured. "It is not late. Stay with me a little!"

"I would stay for ever and ever, my dear!" said he. "Would not a little music soothe you? What was that you were playing as I came in?"

"Oh yes!" said she, rising at once and going to the piano. "It is beautiful. You shall sing it."

So they sat down in tolerable calm. She played the air, and he—who was not a practised singer, but who was ready to do ought to please her—sang the song after a shy failure or two. The last quatrain he sang to her with point:

Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my crown
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen!

GEOLOGY IN PRACTICAL USE.

ONE of the most pressing problems at present before the country is that of technical education, and County Councils are everywhere striving for a practical solution of the same with the money placed at their disposal. Of the many branches of scientific knowledge which it may be decided upon to teach, none can claim to be of greater importance to the country generally than Geology. This seems obvious when we reflect that the wealth of the country depends primarily upon the earth itself—whether by the cultivation of its surface, or the extraction of minerals from it—and that geology is the science of the earth, and therefore lies at the root of both these pursuits. For the ability to deal profitably with any subject must ever be in proportion to our knowledge of the same, and with regard to our dealings with the earth such knowledge is geology. Hence, to a mining and agricultural nation, no scientific knowledge can be of more importance than this.

The value of such knowledge was clearly shown in the early days of the science, and by the labours of William Smith, the 'father of English geology.' Smith was eminently a practical man; his favourite theme was 'geology applied to practice;' and he showed how it may be used in solving the great problems of scientific agriculture, engineering, and mining. He came of a race who had for generations cultivated the oolitic lands of Southern England; and by applying his geological knowledge to the problem, he greatly improved their agricultural value. And it was by an improved system of drainage, founded on correct geological principles, that he was able to do this. His reputation for this sort of work led him out of Oxford into the surrounding counties, Gloucestershire, the Isle of Purbeck, Wiltshire, and elsewhere. An interesting example of the superiority of the geological method may be quoted. A Warwickshire farmer

had originated a system of drainage which had been successfully applied to a large class of lands. He had received a parliamentary grant of one thousand pounds for his invention, and a trial of the process was made by the Board of Agriculture. The place selected was Prisleigh Bog, and the experiment was a failure. Smith then came on the scene, and by an application of his more scientific method, easily accomplished the task.

As regards soils, again, geology is intimately connected with agriculture. For not only is the soil itself a geological formation, but its agricultural value is largely influenced by the rock below. Hence the farmer should not only be familiar with the geological formation of soils, but should also be sufficiently familiar with the rocks to know how they will influence his crops. As indicating this influence, it has been pointed out that many of the more noted cheeses—Stilton, Double Gloucester, Cheddar, &c.—are produced on the rich pastures of the lias; that the best malting barley is grown on the chalk; and that the best apple orchards are upon the red sandstone. The chalk pastures of the South Downs, again, are celebrated for their mutton; while the rich clay lands of Norfolk and Suffolk are more favourable for cattle-rearing and wheat-growing. And so a knowledge of geology may help a farmer to decide upon the most profitable crops.

When it comes to the question of renovating an impoverished soil a knowledge of geology is decidedly useful. If a soil rests on limestone, then a deficiency of calcareous matter may be remedied by deep subsoil ploughing; if on clay, chalk or marl must be sought for: in either case geological knowledge is wanted. A knowledge of geology may also indicate to a farmer the existence of building-stone, limestone for burning, road-metal, or deposits of phosphates on his own land, and thus save much expense in importing the same from a distance.

Not less clearly did Smith show the advantage of geological knowledge in engineering. During the six years he was engaged as engineer in the construction of the Somerset Coal Canal between Bath and the coal-field, he had ample opportunity of putting his gradually increasing geological knowledge to practical use. This canal is cut through the alternating strata of clay and oolitic limestone which characterise the district, and which offer peculiar difficulties to such undertakings. Smith was here able, as we read in his 'Memoirs,' daily to make use of his knowledge of the rocks by 'informing the contractors what would be the nature of the ground to be cut through, what parts of the canal would require unusual care to be kept water-tight, what was the most advantageous system of work.'

Again, the advantage of geological knowledge is noted in the following passage: 'In the execution of the canal, Mr Smith had found the means of applying his newly-acquired knowledge to useful practical problems, such as how to draw the line through a country full of porous rocks, so as best to retain the limited supplies of water which frequent mills left to the navigation—where to place bridges on a good foundation—how to intercept and conduct the springs, and where to open quarries of proper stone.'

By way of contrast may be mentioned the case

of another canal in the same district—the Kennet and Avon Canal—which, though the work of one of the ablest engineers of the day, was not constructed with that careful regard to the geological structure of the district as was the Coal Canal. As in the case of this latter, the nature of the rocks presented special difficulties. When cut through the clay beds, the water was easily retained; but when in the open porous limestone, unless carefully managed, the water would run through and disappear. And the numerous springs to which the alternation of the porous limestone and impervious clay give rise, unless found and properly managed, would burst through the canal wall and cause disastrous results. So bad became the state of this Kennet and Avon Canal, that in 1811 Smith was called in to report upon its state and suggest a remedy. And with the aid of his geological knowledge he was able to give the required advice.

We find again in the same 'Memoir' an interesting application of geological knowledge to a special problem connected with drainage. The year 1799 was an extraordinarily wet one, and owing to the geological structure of the neighbourhood, vast landslips occurred about Bath, carrying with them houses, trees, lawns, and fields. 'To remedy such disasters and prevent their recurrence was exactly what Smith had learned from geology, and had reduced to practice on many occasions while cutting the canal. Naturally, therefore, and as a matter of course, operations of this kind were placed under his care in the vicinity of Bath and Batheaston; and his reputation for success in draining on new principles rose daily.'

Another illustration of the application of geology to a water problem may be quoted. In 1810 great consternation prevailed in Bath at the cessation of the warm spring on which the greatness of the city depends. Smith was sent for, and in a short time the water was flowing in its old channel.

But it is in connection with mining that geology attains its greatest practical importance, for mining is itself nothing more or less than the practical dealing with geological facts. And although the practical work of the 'father of English geology' was more in connection with agriculture and engineering than with mining, we may again quote an instructive example from his experience in connection with the latter. A certain property of seven hundred acres of poor land on the magnesian limestone of the county of Durham was reported as possessing no mineral wealth. Smith was called in to survey the estates of Colonel Braddyll, of which this formed a part. He was specially interested in this portion, which was thought to have nothing but a surface value; and by a survey of the neighbouring coal district he perceived that the magnesian limestone was merely an unconformable cover to the coal-measures. He estimated the thickness of this cover, and declared that coal would be found beneath it at a workable depth. In spite of the old Newcastle prejudice of 'No coal under the magnesian limestone,' Colonel Braddyll followed Smith's advice; and as a result the great South Hetton Colliery was established. Others followed; and now the more important seams of the great northern coal-field are worked beneath the mag-

nesian limestone in the county of Durham. This illustrates perhaps the most important function of geology in mining—the pointing out where coal may be expected at a workable depth.

One of the most interesting and important modern examples is afforded by the recent discovery of coal at Dover. As long ago as 1855 the question of the possible extension of the coal-measures beneath the newer rocks of the south-east of England was discussed by an able geologist, Mr Godwin-Austin. In a paper read before the Geological Society he expressed the opinion that the coal-fields of Bristol and Somerset were prolonged beneath the chalk and other rocks of the southern counties into the coal-fields of Northern France and Belgium. Certain striking points of resemblance between the coal-field of Somerset and that of Belgium, along with other geological considerations, led Mr Godwin-Austin to infer that these coal-fields were united by a ridge of carboniferous rocks passing under the younger rock of the south of England and Northern France. The practical question then was, 'Is there any point along this ridge where the coal is near enough the surface to be profitably worked?'

A few years ago it was determined to put the matter to the test, although a boring put down previously in the Wealden area to a depth of nineteen hundred feet without reaching coal did not offer much encouragement. The experiment was superintended by Professor Boyd Dawkins, and a boring was put down through the chalk of Shakespeare's Cliff, near Dover. And in 1890 the somewhat startling announcement of 'the discovery of coal at Dover' was made.

The spot for the trial seems to have been chosen with great geological insight, for it appears to be just where the younger rocks thin out rapidly against a bank of the older carboniferous strata, and coal was reached at a depth of eleven hundred and sixty feet. At the present moment, the number of seams met with is seven, with a total thickness of a little over fourteen feet. A shaft is also now being sunk, while the boring is continued.

It is, then, among the possibilities of the future that Kent, the garden of England, and hitherto far removed from the smoke of collieries, may become an important mining centre. And if this ever happens, it will be an example of the practical application of geological knowledge.

The probability of finding coal beneath the younger rocks in other areas is at present under discussion among geologists. There can be little doubt, for example, that coal-measures exist beneath the younger rocks on the south as well as on the north of the Mendip Hills. Yet they are at present only worked on the north. The reason is that on the south these younger rocks attain in places a thickness of three thousand feet, while on the north their thickness is often less than two hundred feet. Yet there may be portions of this southern area where the covering may be thin enough to admit of coal being profitably worked. It is a question of geological probability where such sites may be found. One well-known geologist, Mr H. B. Woodward, suggests the neighbourhood of Evercreech and Glastonbury; while another, Mr Ussher, suggests Highbridge, Burham, Wedmore, and other places,

where he thinks the thickness of the younger rocks will not be found to exceed one thousand feet.

Again, the possibility of coal existing at workable depths in the eastern counties has been suggested, and the more likely sites for boring indicated.

For the complete solution of these problems more geological knowledge is perhaps required, and they must be considered at present as merely under discussion. But if the geologist can, as the result of his special knowledge, often point out to the miner where coal may reasonably be expected, he has also often to warn him of those places where labour and money would be wasted in the search. Thus, as we learn from Professor J. Beete-Jukes in the Memoir of the South Staffordshire Coal-field, large sums of money had been from time to time spent in sinking for coal in the Silurian rocks of that district. A very little geological knowledge would have prevented such a waste of money and time.

In the old days, when geology was in its infancy, thousands of pounds were thus frequently thrown away; and many cases are known where the Kimmeridge clay, the Oxford clay, or the old red sandstone, have tempted the unlucky speculator to his pecuniary ruin. The labours of the Geological Survey have gathered together in their maps and Memoirs a mass of information of inestimable value to all engaged in practical dealings with the rocks. No mining engineer can afford to neglect its aid in working any district. But a certain amount of geological training is requisite before they can be profitably used, and hence, again, the need of geology in technical education.

Another plea for the instruction in geology of all those engaged in mining, &c., may be founded on the return benefit which would be reaped by the science. For it is those who are engaged in the actual working of the rocks, who, provided they have the requisite geological training, can best advance the science by the collection of new facts, and thus aid in the further development of those mineral resources to which England owes her present position among the nations.

ELSLIE.

By JOHN STAFFORD.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

It is many years ago now, but it all came back to me to-day at the sound of an old tune which she used to play when loneliness sat hard upon her, and she would take up her fiddle and wander off into a spirit-world of her own making. She often went off so, making me think, as I watched her unawares, of Shelley's *Lanthe* when her spirit and its habitation parted company for a while. And when she would stop, and I knew she was all at Norton Priors again, I would walk away wondering, feeling, among other things, very coarse and humble beside such as she.

It was not always so, for, till she was fifteen or thereabouts, she had raised no thought in me beyond an admiration of her slim uprightness and her grace of movement, which always put

me in mind of the does in the Castle park, and pleased me, maybe, in the same way. But perhaps because I was slow to see it, or because I had known her from a child and taken her as part of the daily life of the place, I never felt the smallest tremor from her beauty, till one day when she ran into the shop all covered with dust from a fall that she had had, and held out her hand for me to draw from it the thorn that was paining her. Tenderly as might be I removed the thorn and bandaged with her handkerchief the little red place, like an adder's bite, which it had left; and I had no sooner done it than, child-like, she threw her arms round my neck and kissed me. I was a hulking lad of twenty then, and a bit sheepish over softness of that kind; but while she hung on to me that instant, and drew her head back before untying her arms, I saw that in her face which, when she was gone, went on vibrating within me, and playing such a tune among my heart-strings that I could get no sleep that night for listening to it, so to speak.

From that day I was never the same, and I hardly knew why. But, heedless-like, I let my thoughts go as they would, and Elsie was always their pivot. It was distracting at first, till I got used to it, and could work on in a dual way, thinking hard on the matter in hand, but knowing her presence within me and grateful for it. In this way she wound herself into the common life of each day, becoming a part of it—a golden thread among the homespun. And so it grew.

But she never dreamt it; and as she got older, and the Misses Garten shaped her into quiet young-ladyhood, our mental and social differences moved her farther and farther from me, till I began to feel no better than a sort of thistle doing homage to a rose nodding far above me. All the same it was good to keep her where she was, and to go on day after day saying nothing of it. It was not a 'sweet sorrow' exactly, such as Shakespeare speaks of, though it became one in after-years, and is one now, maybe. So long as I could see her occasionally, and feel that she lived so near me, breathing the same air and sharing the same village life, I felt content; and, now and again, a quiet little hope would stir in me that by study and hard work I might raise myself nearer to her level. For, after all, I told myself, she was only a miller's daughter, and her widowed mother, whose father had been a major and one of the swells of Cheltenham, could not forget that she had married plain Dan Onslow out of love and nothing else. But it was like clay trying to shape its own vessel without the potter's hand. I was big and awkward, and the most I could do was to fill my emptiness with such knowledge as the few books and little leisure would let me. When my father died, however, and I came into the business, as well as a nice little sum at the bank, I felt a little less afraid of her; and when I put up the new sign which told the folks that I was 'George Crannock, Carpenter and Wheelwright,' I forgot my sorrow and loneliness in the pride of the moment, for I was twenty-four, and a master-man, and the thought puffed me up.

She was away at that time, I remember, staying with some relations at Gloucester; but I got to

know the day she was returning, and when the 'Nemoton Arms' bus passed through on its way to the station at Wonley I gazed after Tom Belson with a touch of envy that he should have the first sight of her. Tom, like Phaethon, was not an over-careful driver, and I could see him swaying in his seat as he turned the corner at the finger-post as if he had lost some of his ballast. I remembered then that it was market-day at Nemoton; but Tom had driven the bus for ten years or more, and I thought nothing more of it as I took up mallet and chisel for the spoke-hole I was making.

Three parts of an hour went by, and I found myself listening to the sound of wheels, though I knew the bus must be a couple of miles off at least. But the minutes went on till it really was due. Jem was sawing a thickish piece of ash, and I stood up and asked him if his buff Leghorn had hatched yet. His saw stopped midway, and I got a moment's stillness as he wiped his brow. He talked on for five minutes or more, then bent to his sawing again. I picked up the spoke, but threw it down, and moved to the door impatiently. Then a distant rumbling reached me, and I went in again, trying not to notice my own fluttering. But the wheels stopped in front of the door, and looking up, I saw it was only Farmer Waghorn in his gig.

'There be a job for thee at Two-mile Corner, Garge,' said he. 'Nemoton bus run agen Squire's cart an' lost near-wheel. No one hurt; but Parson thinks yo' can put wheel right if yo' go down. Him an' his son were in it, along wi' Miss Onslow. They're walkin' up, an' mebbe yo'll meet 'em.'

And meet them I did, coming quietly along by Arbury Wood. Mr St John, the new vicar, spoke first; and while he was telling what had happened, I looked at Elsie, and for a moment our eyes met. She flushed a bit and turned her head, for my glance had been too long, and I reddened myself at the thought of it. Her companion, Henry St John, without noticing me, motioned to go on; but she stood her ground, and when I turned to go, she came straight to me and looked up with her hand touching my arm.

'I am so sorry, Mr Crannock,' said she.

'But there's no harm done, Miss Onslow,' said the vicar. 'Crannock will get a stroke of work, and the bus a new driver, let us hope, after this.'

But I knew what she meant, with a sudden pinch of remorse; for I had thought as much of my own advance as of my father's death. I thanked her as well as I could, and seeing her hand extended, I took it in mine, and could feel the gloved fingers tighten ever so little with the sympathy that moved her. I forgot her fine-lady aspect and everything else, as I looked into her eyes and saw what was in them.

'God bless you, Elsie!'

She flashed another look of kindness, and went her way with the others. But I had seen Henry's brows arch at my impulsive familiarity with her name, and looking back, noted his bent attitude of attention as he walked beside her.

I wondered uneasily how much of the Long Vacation he would spend at Norton Priors. For it must have been he who had brought the happy

flush to her face by his Oxford talk and his well-favouredness. I walked on; but there was something gone from the sunlight, and the tool-bag seemed as heavy as two.

ON CERTAIN FLAVOURINGS.

ONE of the most curious investigations that could be carried out would be a consideration of the various food-substances, condiments, or flavourings and seasonings and food-adjuncts of different nations. Let us confine ourselves here to but one group of plants, which have a wide range of employment for food, from their pungent character—namely, those having allyl compounds, ranging from the onion through the crucifera and other plants with strong flavours.

All the members of this family are more or less esteemed for food and seasoning in different countries. Their strong smell and taste are due to a small quantity of a pungent volatile oil which they contain, rich in sulphur. The importance of the onion will be conceded by all, being wholesome and nutritious, and especially valuable for its antiscorbutic properties. All the plants of this alliaceous group agree in their stimulant and expectorant properties, differing only in degree of activity. The cruciferous plants are also characterised in most instances by their pungency, as in the radish, turnip, cresses, mustard, &c.; but these we cannot enlarge upon.

The onion is probably indigenous to India, whence it extended to China and Japan, and has spread to North Africa and Europe. Onions and garlic are amongst the most important articles of food of the Greeks and other natives of the Mediterranean coasts and the East. These bulbs are prepared in all possible fashions: boiled, baked in hot ashes, made into salad with oil and vinegar, or eaten raw. Both the onion and garlic are cultivated with great care in Greece; also in Malta, the exports from which amount to twenty-two thousand hundredweight in the year.

The ordinary onion, which grows wild in Turkestan, succeeds even in equatorial countries. It is much cultivated and used in the United Kingdom, to the extent of some forty thousand tons; and they are also largely imported from abroad, the imports having doubled in the last ten years, and reached over four million bushels in 1891, valued at about seven hundred and thirty thousand pounds. They are brought in chiefly from Germany and Holland, Portugal and Spain, Turkey and Egypt. Spain takes the lead with a value of £170,735 in 1891; next comes Egypt, £165,825; and then Germany, £106,885. Those grown in the Peninsula are larger and milder than the English ones. The onion is one of the staple products of Bermuda, and those grown there are chiefly shipped to the United States.

The onion and the garlic are extensively cultivated all over India. The onions of Patna and

Bombay are of a very high quality, and are now exported to Australia. It is surprising how powerfully the climate of India seems to affect the onion. In one province excellent onions are to be had, while in another they are very inferior. The cibol or Welsh onion is met with in Central Asia. The onion was one of the principal culture-plants of ancient Egypt. Mohammed never would eat these strong-flavoured bulbs, on account of his assumed converse with the angels. But he allowed his followers to do so, except when appearing in his presence, entering a mosque, or joining in public prayers. The pious Moslem still eats his onions with these limitations. Some sects, however, as the Wahabis, considering them abominable, avoid them on all occasions—they are forbidden because of some supposed relation to beef.

The bulbs of garlic are extensively grown in Turkestan, and used in Lassa. In Yarkand, however, the people do not seem to care about the plant; but they use, according to Dr Aitchison, large quantities of a wild onion, which they collect during the summer, smashing up the whole plant between two stones in a thick green pulp; this they make into patties, which they string together by a hole in the centre, like so many beads, and then hang them up to dry. The country people may be seen on market days bringing into Leh strings of these onion patties for sale. They keep well during winter, and make an excellent condiment. In Spain and Portugal the onion forms one of the common and universal supports of life. It is not merely as a relish that the wayfaring Spaniard eats his onion with his humble crust of bread as he sits by the refreshing spring, for he finds that, like cheese to the English labourer, it sustains his strength, from the amount of flesh-formers and heat-givers which it contains, ranking in this respect with the nutritious pulse and grains.

In North America, the onion not only enters largely into consumption, but is a considerable article of export; 80,275 bushels were shipped from thence in 1890, valued at £12,550. The onion is not likely to become a drug, from the fact that it cannot be easily raised as a winter-keeping vegetable in southern latitudes. The bulb is much inclined to sprout or grow after being harvested, and the condition of success in keeping them is said to be a low dry temperature without frost. Onions and garlic are extensively grown in the south of France, the latter especially on a large scale on the sandy borders of Durance.

The delicate kind of onion called popularly shallot or eschalot is stated to have been brought to Western Europe by the crusaders, who named it after Ascalon, in Palestine, where they found it; but the specific name had already been used by Theophrastus and Pliny. Having a stronger taste than the onion, yet not leaving the strong odour on the palate which that species of allium is accustomed to do, the shallot is often preferred and employed instead, both for eating in its natural state and seasoning. The garlic of Ascalon is an indispensable condiment in modern cookery as a seasoning, and also used in pickles, salads, and to flavour vinegar. The species known as chives is a native of Britain, and available

for salads and condiments. They form a favourite addition to soups in Scotland. Chives are grown in Europe, North America, and Northern Asia, and cultivated as far north as latitude 70° 22'.

The British leek is common in Middle and Southern Europe and Western Asia and Northern Africa. It is called in culture the summer leek, a variety of which is the pearl leek. The whole plant is eaten, being employed in soups, &c., and is by some persons boiled and eaten with meat. Leeks are much more used now than they were at one time.

Garlic is used both in hot and temperate climates. It was cultivated in ancient Egypt. Garlic is eaten to a much greater extent than the onion by the natives of India and Spain, the aggregated white bulb or cloves being offered for sale in every bazaar. A considerable demand has lately sprung up here for garlic oil and garlic vinegar for sauces, pickles, and seasoning. Garlic was formerly held in great repute in medicine, but is seldom employed now in England, although so used in the United States. The cloves of garlic steeped in rum form a favourite remedy among country-people for the whooping-cough, the infusion being rubbed into the skin of the patient's loins. A clove of garlic or a few drops of the juice introduced into the ear are also believed to be highly efficacious in atonic deafness. The tops of the bulbs of *Allium canadense*, of eastern North America, are much sought for to give pickles a superior flavour.

Rocambole, the sand-leek, the Spanish garlic of Europe and North Africa, resembles in some respects garlic, in others, shallot.

The bulbs of *A. Leptophyllum* are eaten by the hill-tribes of India, and the leaves are dried and preserved as a condiment. According to Deslongchamps, the Institutes of Menu prohibit the higher castes from eating the onion, the garlic, and the leek. These three plants are, however, generally cultivated in India at the present day; and the leek, it may be observed, bears the Egyptian name 'khorat.' A Greek word used by Homer is considered to have reference to the leek; and Pliny expressly mentions the presence of this plant in Egypt, where at the present day it is commonly cultivated. The tree onion and the wild garlic of Kamchatka are other species of the *Allium* family.

Among the ancients, condiments to stimulate the sluggish appetite seemed to be in chief demand. Amongst these, asafetida—which is to-day highly relished in Persia and the East—was an indispensable ingredient; and it is even now used moderately by cooks in Europe, to give flavours to some meats and dishes. A few words on these alliaceous gum resins of Asia may be interesting.

The gum resinous exudation known as asafetida, obtained in Persia from several species of *Ferula*, is largely consumed there and in India. It has a nauseous alliaceous smell, but loses some of its odour and strength by keeping. It is locally known as Anguzi; and in India the pure drug is called Hing, and the coarser kind Hingra. India seems to be the principal consumer, as the imports there range from seven to nine thousand hundredweight annually. It is much used by the Hindus as a flavouring for food, being a

favourite ingredient in their curries, sauce for pillaus, &c., on account of its stimulant stomachic properties. The Turkomans are very fond of the young shoots dipped in vinegar. Its uses in Persia are very numerous, especially as a medicine. There are people there who are so accustomed to its use for nervous complaints, that it is like opium to the opium-eaters, one of the necessities of life. Its excellent anti-spasmodic qualities are too little known and appreciated in Europe.

The liquid form of asafetida has from the remotest times been held in great estimation by Eastern doctors, and was once regarded as worth its weight in silver. It is highly esteemed as a carminative and condiment, also as an anti-spasmodic. If taken daily it is said to prevent the attacks of malarious fever.

Galbanum is a product of Syria and Khorasan. Liquid Persian galbanum is derived from an undescribed species of *Ferula*; several of this genus of plants furnish gum resins of an alliaceous odour. Certain others yield the exudation known as sagapenum. It is met with in the form of yellow-brown or reddish agglutinated grains, of garlic odour, intermediate between asafetida and galbanum, and of acrid bitter taste, softening with the warmth of the hand. When heated, it evolves a peculiar smell, partaking of garlic and juniper, which is neither so powerful nor so disagreeable as that of the fetid gum.

THE GOLDEN BRICKS.

By CHARLES EDWARDS.

'Now, boys, let's push this thing through. I've a deal better work on my hands before the sun goes down.'

And the auctioneer went on with a few stereotyped jests, at which he himself laughed, as also did the majority of the men who wereolling within easy sound of his voice.

But there was one man who did not laugh. Crank Partick was old and bent, and he wore his gray hair and beard like a veteran who has long lost his interest in life, and has no women-folk about him mindful of his exterior presentment. Crank Partick had edged his way to the auctioneer's feet. There he sat on the ground with a look in his bleared old eyes like that of a dog with a bad master, from whom one caress may, however, atone for fifty kicks. He took no notice of any one except the auctioneer.

With Partick was another man, some thirty years his junior. This was Steve Brown, his son-in-law. Steve, who seemed much entertained by his father-in-law's appearance, smoked a short black pipe, and winked at the other boys off and on, nodding in a half-compassionate manner towards old Partick.

A stout person with a hooked nose found this little group so interesting that he edged up to Steve and whispered: 'What's the game, Steve?'

Steve merely hitched his shoulders as, with a smile in the corner of his mouth, he replied, against the back of his hairy brown hand: 'Oh,

just a bit of a craze in the old un, nothing more, as I know of. There never was such an old fool.'

This seemed to satisfy the hook-nosed man, though he paid profound attention to Crank Partick, even when he had withdrawn and set his shoulder-blades against the tumble-down bit of wall that supported most of the other bystanders.

'Now, then,' resumed the auctioneer, 'you all know the biz. There it is; look at it, and stump up your offers. Make your offers, gentlemen, and a tall drink for the one that begins with any decency.' He pointed as he spoke to the red house behind him.

It was not much of a house, just a two-storeyed red brick building, with five windows in front, no glass in its windows, a broken chimney, and the words 'President Villa' impudently staring at the small crowd from a stone cross-piece over the door. The bricks showed unmistakable signs of crumbling. The house had clearly served its turn.

'Gentlemen, gentlemen'—the auctioneer was beginning again, when old Partick wrenched out a cry of, 'A hundred dollars!'

'Thank you, Mr Partick,' was the ironical reply. 'One hundred dollars! There's a drink booked for Mr Partick at the Beggar on Horseback.—You may just as well know, all of you, that it's only the bricks and fittings that are going. Guess you thought the land was with it when you made your offer—ch, Mr Partick?'

Crank Partick did not move a muscle. His parchment-face was upturned towards the auctioneer, and the renewed laughter of the boys was nothing to him.

'One hundred dollars for building material of the very first water!' cried the auctioneer derisively. 'Gentlemen, what on airth are you dreaming about? This is one of the oldest edifices in the township. You'll not match these bricks in a hurry. It's a house with a history, I'm told—and all for a hundred dollars.'

'I'll rise twenty-five,' observed the hook-nosed man. 'I fancy them bricks—good colour, you know.'

'One hundred and twenty-five dollars bid!' exclaimed the auctioneer.

'Fifty!' said Partick.

'One hundred and fifty! Tell you what, gentlemen, you'd do well, any one of you, to buy this house and retail its bricks as keepsakes. Or, better still, pack it all slick off to Chicago for the show. There'd be no worrying around with it there. There's a thousand millionaires who'd jump at it for their garden-plots and all that. Talk about your Ann Hathaway's cottages from England! This beats it hollow. One hundred and fifty dollars offered by Mr Partick.'

'Didn't know you were worth all that—the lot of you, Steve!' whispered the vendor in an aside to Crank Partick's son-in-law.

'Nor me,' was the rejoinder. 'He's off his nut, but I can't help it.'

'Another twenty-five!' said the hook-nosed man.

'That's two hundred dollars, less twenty-five!' said the auctioneer.

'Two hundred, sir,' sighed Crank Partick. This time, at any rate, the old fellow showed some emotion. There was a flavour of ripe human despair in his voice.

'Two hundred!' cried the auctioneer. 'Ah, gentlemen, make room there for Mr Bex, the famous photographer. Didn't I tell you I was offering you a rare good thing, and only two hundred dollars offered!—Come along, Mr Bex—you've come to make a picture of this most remarkable building, haven't you?'

Mr Bex the photographer nodded, and, the sun being favourable, straightway fixed his camera.

'Old place, sir, ain't it?' continued the auctioneer.

'Well, for this part of the world, it *is* old,' the photographer admitted. 'There's been some famous paper signed in that house; there wasn't much township when it was raised. I guess there's enough interest in it in the State to pay me my trouble.'

'That's so,' ejaculated the auctioneer.—'Hear him, gentlemen! Mr Bex ain't the man to delude you. He's a business man, like the best of us.—Now, I ask you straight, where's *my* profit on this morning's work if I let the whole house go to Mr Partick for a couple of hundred dollars?—What did you say, Mr Partick?'

'I said as there was the work of pulling it to pieces, I did,' was the weak, tremulous reply from the old man.

'And twenty-five,' said the hook-nosed man promptly. Mr Partick's evident terrible earnestness impressed him.

Crank Partick began to shake violently. He muttered to himself, and the auctioneer saw red agonised streaks in his yellowish eyeballs as he rolled them in his sockets.

'Reckon that'll stop you,' observed Steve, thrusting his little finger into his pipe-bowl in a nonchalant manner.

'Two twenty-five—any more, gentlemen?—any more, I say? Once, twice'—

'Two fifty,' screamed Crank Partick, with foam about his lips.

The auctioneer seemed amazed; so did the bystanders. But the former instantly recovered himself, and looked towards the hook-nosed rival—to behold him fall suddenly on his face.

The sale was suspended while they crowded round to ascertain what had come to Solly Moss. They turned him over, and tried to put him on his legs again. But it was no good. Solly Moss's heart had given out, with not a moment's warning. When this was understood, six of the boys carried him off to his wife, commenting over his body between their gasps upon the strangeness of the occurrence.

It was a sight to see Crank Partick's face while this was happening. The old man's eyes had dilated, and an expression of brutal triumph sat therein and upon his thin worn lips.

Mr Bex the photographer soonest recovered self-possession. Having taken the house, he took the death-group with professional celerity and

unobtrusiveness; and then he took Mr Partick's face, the like of which he had never yet seen.

So five minutes passed. Then the auctioneer returned to his duties. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'this is a most extraordinary and unparalleled occurrence. I've seen a good deal of the world, but I've never before had a bidder drop off like that. But, as the Bible tells us, all flesh is grass: we're here to-day, and gone to-morrow; and so we must make the most of the flying moments while they're on the wing.—Any rise on Mr Partick's two hundred and fifty dollars for the bricks?'

'Two hundred, I said!' protested old Partick, writhing as if he had been pinched.

The auctioneer pursed his lips. 'I guess that's a lie, sir,' he said solemnly. 'Think of what's just happened, sir, and remember Ananias and the lady in the Acts of the Apostles.—I've two hundred and fifty offered by Mr Partick. Any rise—once, twice—twice—thrice!—There, it's yours; and I'll trouble you for settlement right away.'

The auctioneer had to accompany Crank Partick to his bit of a shanty hard by. Here, to Steve Brown's surprise, the old fellow went to a board in the floor and took from beneath it greenbacks and silver for the requisite amount.

'How much more have you got, dad, under there?' Steve inquired, when the auctioneer had gone.

'There was only three hundred altogether, Steve darling,' was the old fellow's excited reply. 'I'd have died, I would, if that other one hadn't dropped off. There's glad times coming for us, Steve. I'll tell you all about it to-night, every word.'

'Well, I'm a bit bothered,' said Steve, as he went off to digest this purchase with more tobacco, and also to find out what had killed Solly Moss.

'Shut the door, Steve,' said old Partick, 'and jam things agin it. There ain't no room in what I've got to say for any besides you to hear it.'

'My sakes, what's a-coming?' laughed Steve Brown. 'They say Solly's got his billet through the visitation o' God, whatever that may mean. No larks, dad: you ain't going to turn wild and fix me up for the boys to say the same of, eh?'

'I've been waiting for this day five-and-thirty years, and it's come. Run that there bed agin the door and put the bottle near, and then I'll tell you about it.'

'Grave serious, dad?'

'You'll say that this time a week, my son, when we've split up them bricks, you and me, and never another in the world, mind that.'

'Sounds lively. Well, I'll just humour you, boss. Guess I ought to be a match for you if you begin to rave.'

So saying, Steve Brown ran the bed to the door of their bit of a cottage and pressed it tight. Then he shook the lamp, as if to menace the oil with something worse than burning if it refused to do its duty to the best of its ability; fetched the whisky bottle and banged it upon the rough table by old Partick's chair. 'Liquor up, dad, and reel out,' he exclaimed genially.

The old man poured himself a dose of the spirit, and with trembling hands tossed it down his throat. 'Eh, but that's fine!' he muttered;

'and to think as I should live to be rich, after all!'

'Oh, it's that way, is it?' said Steve sharply. 'I'm all ears, then.'

After a brief spell of gasping and lip-licking—for the whisky was fiery as well as palatable—Crank Partick plunged into his story:

'There was me and a pal, name of Johnson, that worked together at them diggings up Sacramento way when fust they was talked about. I can't exac'ly remember what year it was, but it was a dreadful lot of Christmases ago. I mind the Christmases because it was Christmas week as that cursed cow of a Marshal took the bricks from us to build that there house. He didn't take them from Johnson neither, because Johnson had turned up his toes the day before. If it hadn't ha' been for that, we'd ha' fought for them, Johnson and me, City Marshal or no City Marshal, and abode by the consequences.

'I tell you, Steve, lad, we didn't do bad at all, Johnson and me. We was there among them rivers and rocks, and as wild a crew of fellers as ever I see, for two months just. I was to marry Jane if I did pretty well. She were your wife's mother, after all, for she were a stickfast sort of a one; and once her heart was given, it warn't took back. But, good sakes, lad, what a difference it made me, marrying her! Wimmen, Steve, wants to be kept under. I pined foolish, and didn't let on as what the matter was; and the consequence was she stuck her spurs into me right and left long as she lived. Nance, our girl, would ha' been just the same if her fust baby hadn't done for her. There's comfort in them kind o' thoughts, Steve, and so I tell yer.'

'Not much,' observed Steve, who had been very fond of his young wife.—'But drive on. I like your tale, dad, a deal better than your sentiments. You can cut them, if you like, and steer straight for the bricks.'

'I'll try, Steve,' was the reply, 'for you were a good husband to Nance, you were that.—It was this way, then. Johnson and me had got about as much gold as we could stick on our backs and do a day's tramp with without screeching. And so I says to Johnson, "Let's go off with what we've got;" and he says, "Right you are."

'There were sixty pounds of it between us. How lovely it was to dander it through our fingers all a trickling like yellow water with the sun on it! Sixty pounds, Steve, only think!'

'Great Jupiter!' ejaculated Steve.

'But,' resumed Crank Partick, 'they were mighty bad times there then, and we warn't over-much sure of getting through with our pile. Still, try it, we meant; and try it we did.'

'I can't kinder remember how many days we footed it; but we come by-in-by to the funniest thing you ever see in a place where there warn't no town nor nothing. It was a pit of red clay with a bit of a kiln, and two carts, and just three men working it. We stopped the night and talked with them, and they told us how a chap was going to raise a town not five miles off, and he'd bought up all the bricks as they could turn out. "All?" said Johnson. "Couldn't my pal and me have one cartload to our own hook?" I didn't take him at fust; but when he wunk at me, I knew something was in the

wind, and I backed him. The men thought we were crazy; but all the same we bought horse and cart and a good load of them red bricks for a matter of five pounds of dust. It warn't cheap; it were dear; but them was times as you couldn't pick an' choose in.

'That night, what must Johnson and me do when the others were asleep, but melt our ounces into hot lumps of gold, and cut 'em into bricks of, I guess, nigh on three pounds each. Then we got clay—there was lots of it about—and dumped it round the gold; and so in the end there were one-and-twenty bricks which had our fortunes in their bellies, and which we meant to get baked and take along with us. Reckon you begin to see now what's coming?''

'Reckon I do,' gasped Steve. 'Go on, dad.'

'Well, we got off, Johnson and me, and made up to fetch a round route away from the blistering new township they'd told us of. It was that as wrecked us. Johnson were took ill and died, and I buried him, and knew that it made me twice the man I was before. And I were that impatient, I pushed on and on, and dreamed a heap of fine dreams about what I'd do *when* the gold was all in bank.'

'But it was in the middle of them dreams that one day up druv the Marshal and collared the horse and cart and bricks. "Where's your pal?" he asked; and when I told him, he said that yarn wouldn't wash, and that I'd done away with him for the gold we'd got between us. You see, Steve, what a fix he put me in. I swore as we'd got no more gold; and he searched me, and said it was lucky he found none, or I'd ha' been strung up—and he were the man to do it. And he pinched the bricks, and said they were his; and if I didn't disappear, it would be all up with me.—Steve, I can't think of it without trembling; it seems to me that my best manhood went out of me after that day.'

'And those scrumptious bricks are in the house we've bought to-day?' cried Steve, heedless of the pathos in his father-in-law's story.

'They are. I sneaked in after them, and lay hid till I'd seen them made into walls. Then I took my hook, swearing I'd never rest till I'd got my own agin.'

'And Johnson's too, dad. The drinks and square meals we'll have when we've laid the thing flat!—But let's hear it all while we're about it.'

'I guess there ain't much more to tell. That dog of a Marshal lived fifteen years after building the house, living in it all the time. When he was dead, I crep back to the township, and here we've been ever since. I've never took eyes off it, and I've scraped and saved to buy it, let alone hammering and scratching at every brick as I could reach when I could do it without being seen. I thought the day would never come; but come it has at last!' Old Partick helped himself to more whisky.

'By Jove!' exclaimed Steve, 'I'll believe it all, dad. It would have been pizen for you if Solly Moss had filched it off us.'

It was as Crank Partick had said. But the gold was not found on the first day of the search for it; nor the second; nor the seventh.

The dead-heads of the township thought their

work in the gutted interior of the old house a great joke, and did not keep their opinion to themselves. The interest they showed in the business maddened Partick. He would fain have had a ten-foot wall built round his newly-acquired property. But Steve's saner mind tackled the problem more effectually.

'The old un,' said that discreet young man to the idlers, 'is head downwards. He thinks we've a fortune to make out of split bricks, and so split 'em—every mother's son—we mean to. There is some of a market for 'em; but I reckon we'll do well if we see our money back. Besides, the boss who owns the land, he wants it cleared mighty quick. That's what it comes to—see!'

Those of them who *saw* were vastly entertained. The others smoked and chaffed, and when they grew tired of watching the two men picking at the bricks—and breaking one about once in a minute—slouched off to more congenial fields of idleness.

But you should have seen the frenzied way in which the two men worked when they had the place to themselves. It was the heart of the summer-time, and they watered the dry soil and dust about them with the sweat of their brows. The toil told on Crank Partick. After the first day he was wofully exhausted. On the third evening he was evidently nearly worn out.

'You'd better knock off and leave it all to me, dad,' said Steve.

But this did not satisfy Crank Partick. 'I'll do it, lad,' he stammered—'I'll do it on liquor; that'll hold me up.'

'I ain't so sure about that,' objected Steve—quite to no purpose, however, for his father-in-law soaked whisky into himself every evening.

It was wonderful with what a spurt of renewed energy old Partick began each of the succeeding days. For an hour or more he put Steve in the shade as a destructive mason. Then the vigour would rapidly weaken in him, and by noon he was incapable of doing aught but sit on a heap of the rubble using his pick mechanically. Even then, however, his eyes were aglow. They missed none of Steve's movements, and burned in hatred at any visitors who lounged into the precincts.

On the sixth day, thanks mainly to Steve's abounding pertinacity, they had reduced the villa so that it was merely a shell some eight feet high. The aid of an expert had been requisitioned to batter the walls. *Their* work was to split the bricks merely, and cast the debris outside.

The seventh day found Crank Partick unable to do aught but swallow whisky.

'You just stick to your bed, boss,' said Steve, 'and leave it all to me. I ain't a-going to steal a run on you, so don't think it. I ain't so dead sure you've remembered the history of that there gold right; but I'll go through with it now and chance it; and soon as I strike anything good, I'll bring you word.'

But this did not please the old man. He had therefore to be led tottering into the house and set where he could still overlook Steve's exertions.

A fortnight went by. There was now nothing but a parapet of red bricks waist high environing them. Crank Partick's mind seemed quite unbinged by excitement, and a grim terror lest

somehow he had been overreached, after all. He would sit in a heap all day, groaning and glowering.

'Dad,' said Steve at last, 'I've lost a'most more flesh over this biz than I had to start with. I'm ready to knock under.'

'Knock under! Oh, you fool, Steve! It's there; it must be there! I seen 'em *all* laid with these very eyes—*all*, I tell you, and the gold uns was with 'em. They'll be at the bottom.—Oh, sweet heaven over us, don't you let me jine Johnson till I've had it between these fingers!'

Steve shrugged his shoulders and again grasped the moist-handled pick. 'Perhaps you're right—I dunno. Anyway, I won't say die yet.'

'And Steve, dear, it'll all be yours—remember that, for I'm a bit shaken more than I'll bear, and I shan't live long.'

And again the clink, clink of the iron sounded in the enclosure. The echo in the place was very feeble now. There was next to no wall to trifle with the sound.

The old man was prostrate the next day—speechless and limp, with positive signs of approaching death upon him. Steve fetched a doctor, who did but confirm the evidence of the portents visible even to unprofessional eyes.

'He may splutter a bit, and then he'll drop off,' said the medical man. 'I'm no use.'

'Dad,' cried Steve in the dulled ears of the dying man, 'I'm going to stop with you to-day—you're above a bit off colour.'

For five or six moments there was no coherent response to these words. Crank Partick was struggling to say something, but nothing would come. Then, however, he half rose with a jerk and hurled the one word 'Go!' at his son-in-law, dropping back afterwards with a thud.

'Pretty!' murmured Steve; but he went, having arranged with a woman-neighbour to look in upon the sick man every half-hour.

It was nearly one o'clock this day when Steve came upon the first of the twenty-one bricks. The 'clink' was different from that of the rest, and at the blow the thing broke into scales, beneath which there was a yellow gleam that made the young man's heart leap. Another knock, and the cake of gold was disclosed. He shook it clear of the dust and spikes of baked clay, and ran with it under his jacket to his father-in-law.

'Look here, dad!' he cried, flourishing the gold above the pillow—'look here, I say—it's all right. If there's one, there's bound to be more.'

Crank Partick was at the last gasp. He opened his eyes wearily, and the shrunken lids closed over them again.

'It's the gold, dad—it's found,' whispered Steve in the old man's ear.

The words reached him now. His lips slowly parted. 'I told you so!' the lips said, faintly as the rustle of trees far, far away. The right hand moved feebly, with a widening of the fingers; and Steve, rightly understanding the sign, put the gold brick into the palm. The fingers gripped it tenaciously for an instant, then it fell on the ground, and, with a gasp, Crank Partick died—a smile of strange triumph on his face.

Steve recovered the gold from all the bricks;

it made weight enough to bring him twelve thousand dollars. The township people wondered why he gave his old idiot of a father-in-law so expensive an interment.

CATCHING A TARTAR.

A YEAR or two ago the 'Standard' contained an account—sent by its Berlin correspondent—of a fight between a hare and an eagle owl, which had an unexpected termination. The owl, it appears, attacked the hare with the intention of making a meal off it, but met with a resistance for which it had not bargained. In the end the hare became the victor, escaping apparently unhurt, and left its formidable antagonist tumbling about on the ground with a broken wing.

Such turning of tables by the weak on the strong, when the strong is the aggressor, is by no means unprecedented in the records of the animal world. At the same time, any one who is acquainted with the eagle owl—and what visitor to the London Zoological Gardens is not?—will have a high opinion of the courage—although it was the courage of despair—shown by poor puss on this occasion. The eagle owl is an alarming-looking bird at the best of times; but when he is angry or excited, his appearance is truly fiendish. At such times his feathers stand out on end all round him; his eyes burn like live coals; and how he hisses! Until one has heard him, one can form no idea how expressive of hatred and contempt a mere hiss can be made. The hiss gradually increases in volume until the culminating point is reached, and then the owl projects itself violently against the wire of the aviary, and the startled visitor beats a hasty and undignified retreat. Such at least are the manners and customs of the eagle owl in other places of confinement. In the London Zoological Gardens these birds have grown so accustomed to being stared at, that they seem to think it scarcely worth while to indulge in any display of animosity. They take refuge in sulky, silent dignity.

The hare certainly showed her mettle in this case; but then, she is not altogether so timid as we commonly imagine her to be. She readily flies from man indeed, except during the month of March, when her proverbial 'madness' is upon her, and when she shows a curious deliberateness in all her movements utterly at variance with her usual habits. But she has been known to stand up boldly against attacks made upon her, or more especially her offspring. Bishop Stanley gives an account of such an event. A small hawk, probably a kestrel, was seen to be carrying an animal of some kind in its talons; while on the ground immediately below, a hare was observed keeping up with the hawk. The bird being evidently over-weighted, was unable to rise, and flew close to the ground, sometimes almost sinking to the earth; and each time it came within reach of the hare, she struck it with her paws. At length

this persecution proved too much for the hawk, which relinquished its prey and soared off into space and peace. It was found that the hawk's quarry was a young leveret, which its parent thus rescued from death.

Kestrels, keen-sighted though they are, sometimes get into trouble on their piratical expeditions. One of these birds was seen to drop, in the characteristic stone-like fashion of its kind, on some object in a field over which it had been hovering. It rose with a small animal struggling in its claws; but soon began to show signs of distress, and to fly heavily and painfully. At last it fell fluttering to the ground. On the man who had watched the proceedings going up to see what had happened, a weasel, apparently uninjured, slipped from the body of the dying bird, and disappeared. A wound in the throat of the kestrel explained matters. The hawk in catching the weasel had caught a veritable Tartar. The weasel, objecting to be made a meal of by the hawk, had managed to wriggle his lissome body round and inflict the wound. Last April, a gamekeeper in Norfolk found a kestrel and a small rabbit in the same trap. The trap was one of the ordinary toothed abominations which close with a spring, and had been set close to the mouth of the rabbit's hole. Once closed, such a trap remains closed till it is reset. How, then, could both kestrel and rabbit have been caught in it? Probably the kestrel struck the rabbit a little way from home, and the victim in its struggles dragged the murderer into the trap's deadly grip.

It is of course chiefly in defence of their young that birds and animals show most courage. Black-birds often succeed in driving cats from the neighbourhood of their nests; while it is upon record that a rook, single-handed, drove away with ignominy three ravens which had approached her young with marauding intentions. Those terrible harriers of farmyards, sparrow-hawks, are frequently put to flight, and sometimes even meet with their death at the beak and claws of the infuriated hen whose chickens they seek to capture. Indeed, some hens, as most people know, will not allow a strange human being to approach their broods without rushing at him with ruffled plumage and extended wings.

One would imagine that a cockchafer was a still more harmless 'beastie' ordinarily than a hen, and yet a cockchafer has been known to prove more than a match for a bat. It happened in this wise: Two people were out walking one summer evening in the country, when they were startled by something falling suddenly at their feet. Stooping to see what it was, they found a small bat with a cockchafer clinging firmly to its side, just under the wing. The cockchafer was removed, and the bat resumed its flight.

A few years ago, in one of the low-lying parts of Surrey, a snipe was picked up dead with a freshwater mussel firmly attached to the end of its beak. The valves of the shell had closed on the snipe's beak, and the unfortunate bird was thus held prisoner till it died of starvation. Both bird and shell were preserved as a literal example of the biter being bit.

A wasp caught in the meshes of a spider's web proves a very ugly customer for his capturer to tackle. The wasp says to the spider, in language

there is no mistaking: 'You had better beware my sting.' The spider, keeping at a respectful distance, does her utmost to set her unacceptable captive free. She makes no attempt to 'rope' him by throwing her toils, thread by thread, around him, as she would do if it was only a blue-bottle with which she had to deal. On the contrary, she seconds the efforts of the wasp to escape by shaking her web violently.

A cock-pheasant once found himself placed in a very awkward predicament, thanks to his inveterate love of fighting. A young lady, wearing a red cloak, was walking in a country lane, when she was flown at and set upon violently by a handsome cock-pheasant. The pheasant seems to have taken the lady, from her scarlet cloak, for some large strangely-plumaged bird trespassing on his domain. The young lady tried in vain to repel his attacks, until at last she was compelled to seize him and carry him home with her bodily. When she reached home, she let her prisoner go free, and off he stalked, trying, by a show of dignity, to conceal his chagrin at having thus caught a Tartar.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

SHE was never married, our dear old Aunt,
Our mother's old Aunt Bess;
We girls could never imagine why,
Though we often tried to guess.

Her sweet old face, her wistful smile,
And her eyes that seemed to say:
'I too had a lover once, my dears,
In a long past yesterday.'

We were a party of merry girls
Who never had known a cure:
Our heads full of lovers and love affairs,
And our hearts as light as air.

One evening, our youngest, our winsome Kate
(Her own wedding day was near),
Said: 'Why had you never a wedding day?
Ah! do tell us, Auntie dear.'

But the sweet blue eyes grew sadly dim
With tears that did not fall,
And a faint flush tinged her cheek as she said:
'My dear, he ceased to call.'

A sudden hush fell over us then—
Our heart-beats you might have heard,
As she slowly rose and left the room
With never another word.

* * * * *
Ah me! since that April afternoon
I have seen both shower and shine,
Katie married—and Winnie dead—
And a lonely hearth is mine.

And oft in the quiet evening hour,
When the silent shadows fall,
I think of my dear old Auntie Bess,
And her lover—who ceased to call.

MAUD HOUSTON.

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LIMITS AND LIMITATIONS.

BESIDE the Limits which human beings have to acknowledge as such, there exist a man's own personal Limitations to be reckoned with. The practical philosopher, in the person of Mr Besant—*vide his Eulogy of Richard Jefferies*—bids him find out those limits, work in them, and be content. This advice, though little other than the heathen sage's, 'Know thyself,' since to know one's self argues a knowledge of one's limitations—to carry this advice into effect requires a certain amount of insight, acquired by an uncertain amount of effort. One may be the 'limited little brute' Miss Bella Wilfer called herself, and yet never attain her insight to perceive and her candour and courage to avow her limitations. There are those whose limitations, perfectly perceptible to those about them, remain a profound secret to themselves all through their lives; and there are those whose apparent limitations—patent enough to all appearance—are in reality mere sheaths and husks, which in the course of their development will be sloughed and cast aside, as they emerge and make 'a large room' for themselves. Genius may be safely trusted to find this room for itself; sometimes it takes the expression of a belief in its limitations as the signal for it to transcend those limits, as Lord Byron did. Or it will retire into a ten years' silence, as did Lord Tennyson, before finally emerging as one of the Immortals. Or it will be magnificently indifferent, as was Burns, as to whether what he had in hand would turn out 'a sang' or 'a sermon.'

And not in poetry only may genius be found overstepping the ordinary limits of mankind. In one profession, notably, where nature would seem, at first sight, to have fixed the boundaries of a man's career, she will, by endowing him with a Promethean spark, enable him to conquer what looked like her own limitations. Though the man to whom she has given a commanding presence, a tragic cast of countenance, and a deep voice, restricts himself, if he be wise, to playing

tragedy and melodrama; while he who is gifted with comic features, insignificant stature, and endless drollery, labours in his vocation when he plays the fool; a third, of ordinary, or even plain and unattractive form and features, but whose lips have been touched with a live coal from the altar, will, like Rachel, secure histrionic triumphs to which the merely beautiful or graceful in vain aspire.

And while thus considering the large room genius makes for itself, it may not be out of place here to inquire why it is that the mothers of men of genius are credited with so large an influence in the development of their sons' capacity, and that an attempt is seldom or never made to lift the fathers on to a similar pedestal? It may be that a man, without being exactly incredulous of his offspring's intelligence, has been made, by experience and contact with the world, cautious in crediting any one, even his own son, with a capability of doing, until something has been done, and that this atmosphere of incredulity, unfavourable to the development of talent, as it is allowed on all hands to be, constitutes the difference of training which the child receives at the hands of its parents.

As the soil is to the plant, so is its environment to the young soul, which, though it may, by flattery or over-indulgence, foster the ill weeds of conceit and self-sufficiency, may, and does, on the other hand, dwarf and warp its growth by a stinting diet of incredulity or disparagement. It is a common observation that youth can do itself more justice, be more 'itself' among strangers, than at home, where nothing is expected of it; and thus it is perhaps that home-keeping youths have ever homely wits; while abroad, free from the heavy, incombustible atmosphere that a presumptive acquaintance with their limitations imposes, they branch out into sallies of sense or humour. Falstaff complains jestingly that not only is he witty himself, but the cause of wit in others: in a similar manner, there are those whose dullness is a cause of dullness in others. The limitations of Napoleon III's intel-

ligence, the influence of his entirely negative intellect, are said to have been such as to infect the consciousness of all who came in contact with him. 'I cannot talk, with Civet in the room,' says Cowper, 'a fine puss gentleman who's all perfume.' The perfume may be a very fine perfume, an art-jargon that babbles of the 'tender rendering' of a boot-jack, or the 'sympathetic *timbre* of a baritone,' or it may be merely the perfume of the 'shop' to which the speaker is attached, but it suffices to choke the general auditor. A man of Dr Johnson's extended powers no doubt was right in feeling complimented when he heard that a lady had said of him—speaking to one who complained of having been in a company where only 'runts' were talked of—'Well, sir, Dr Johnson would have talked of runts; yet even he confessed to Boswell that he felt the tediousness of the company of his old schoolfellow, whose 'talk'—like that of the man in Ecclesiasticus—'was of bullocks.'

That it is of great importance to a man in any walk of life to find out his limitations cannot be denied. It is a pitiful waste of time for a man to pass half a lifetime trying to catch hold of something which he has no real power to grasp. Yet this ignorance of the limits of his powers is often the result of outside influence. 'That which one can do, another may do,' is re-echoed around the neophyte; and giving credit to this untriest of axioms, he allows himself to be entered for a race beyond his strength; urged and goaded into attempting that which is permanently beyond his powers. An addiction to a study, an art, or a business which comes spontaneously and from within, may generally be trusted; while that which is the result of pressure, or a morbid and over-stimulated ambition, usually bears but one fruit—failure. On the other hand, to dwell on one's limitations, or to have them daily insisted on, is comparable to placing a transparent but impassable globe over a butterfly, and then demonstrating the futility of its powers of flight. We have seldom admired the surpassing beauty of the 'Prentice's Pillar in Rosslyn Chapel without an inward conviction that it owed its creation in no small degree to the absence of the Master, an absence which left the 'Prentice free to find out his own capabilities for himself.

In some directions, the limits of a man's powers are not difficult of determination. For instance, there seems to be a point in the game of chess beyond which an ordinary player does not easily pass. His capacity to unravel the intricacies, foresee and provide against the contingencies of that wonderful game, is, so to say, exhausted; and he who constantly succumbs to his opponent's power of combination and dexterity in marshalling his forces, may fairly be said to have found his limit—in that direction at least. He, too, who perpetually loses his head, or his way, in the analogous game of life, may safely suspect the limitations have been reached of his own perspicacity and foresight.

But it is obvious that, while certain of our powers seem doomed to the strictest limitations, there are other and not less noble ones, capable, apparently, of almost unlimited expansion. That by no manner of means may an oak-tree be evolved from a cabbage, we freely admit; but

unless a soul is granted to a cabbage, or denied to a man, the analogy will not hold good. While the limits of speculative thought first discovered have in scarce any direction been since overstepped, the delimitations of the frontiers of morality are—and have been—progressive. As in the world, so in man; while incapable perhaps of adding an intellectual cubit to his stature, he may—nay, frequently does—exchange a capacity for an acquirement. It was possible for him to be charitable; he is beneficent. Few suspect the depth of their own power of endurance until an inexorable fate calls it forth, and it becomes—heroism. Pity is exalted into a divine compassion. Under the nettle Disappointment, grows the flower Humility. From the perception of benefits spring gratitude and love, and the joy of living on so beautiful a globe, hung like an iridescent air-bubble in the firmament! Even the brevity of the allotted span of life—its incertitude, its mystery, its pain—is but the exchange of an earthly vitality for a divine vitality. In short, while a Darwin converts himself into a machine for grinding out facts, by means of which may be evolved an all-important law of nature, each human being possesses within himself the power, not merely of observing, but of enlarging the limits of the divinest part of himself—that which constitutes his character, and is, so to speak, the protoplasm of his soul. Self-possession, self-control, self-command, all that made the glory of the philosopher, are merged in the humility which trusts in the highest, the greatest, and wisest, as well as the most infinitely tender of Guides.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXIV.—THE TAME PHILOSOPHER IN DANIEL'S DEN.

ALAN AINSWORTH went to his rooms that night treading on air, singing and making melody in his heart. He loved his love, and his love loved him—loved him truly, freely, and unreservedly, as only a noble, generous-tempered woman does love. There were difficulties, to be turned rather than surmounted; but they only added a zest to his feeling, for he was in no doubt about the issue. His sweetheart had surrendered herself to be guided by him: she had sweetly bent to him; and he was a new man. He felt strong, and he rejoiced. His two successes coming together had this great effect on him. He had been very doubtful whether the public would care for his play: and they had received it with acclamation. He had frequently been despondent in his love—had often wondered if a rare creature like Isabel could find in him anything at all: and she, who had hitherto appeared stronger than he—stronger in mind and in heart—had yielded to him as the lord of her life. So he was strong and of a good courage—of a temper to be daunted by nothing that might arise. He knew that it was rather because of her own generous quality than because of his supreme desert that Isabel had yielded herself so ungrudgingly, but yet the effect on him was the same as if his own merit and his own hand had gotten

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him the victory. Herein is the infinite reward of true love, that, with the flattery of feeling on the one side, and on the other—of homage and devotion—we come to believe our poor little best qualities to be active and constant, and in so believing we cultivate them into activity and constancy.

As for Isabel—when her lover had departed, she began to brood despondently upon the pain she must give to George. It seemed more difficult than ever that she should break with him. She imagined herself going to him and saying: 'You have generously loved me, I believe, all your life, since we were boy and girl together; and you asked me to be your wife, and I have agreed and have led you to suppose that I loved you. I now find that I do not love you truly, and that I cannot marry you! For your faithful love of a life all I can give you is a broken promise!'—and she shrank from it with shame and alarm. It would be easier to write that, but it would be cowardly to seek to shun the full shame of speech; and she could not come to speech with George at once. But, as Alan had said, 'One thing at a time.' She had promised to go to her uncle on the morrow and make him take over her money. But would not her uncle laugh at her, and think her gone mad? Yet she had promised, and she would go, and perhaps something might come of it.

On the afternoon of next day, therefore, she went to Rutland Gate. She asked the important person in black who opened the door if her uncle were in; and he replied that Mr Suffield was not at home—was gone back to Lancashire—but that Mrs Suffield was at home. That seemed to her strange and ominous, but she followed the footman into the drawing-room, where Mrs Suffield sat alone, with a book in her lap, as if she were reading.

'Is anything the matter, aunt?' asked Isabel, 'that uncle has rushed off again to Lancashire?'

'Is anything the matter, my dear,' retorted her aunt, 'that you have rushed in now, when we only parted from you yesterday?'

'Yes,' said Isabel, on the inspiration of the moment; 'for some time I have had a feeling that something was going to happen to uncle. The feeling has come and gone; but to-day it has been specially strong. Is anything wrong? You know all my money—all I have—I would gladly give to help uncle!'

Her aunt considered her closely, and then went to her and kissed her with tears in her eyes. 'You are a good girl,' said she. 'All I know is that that M'Fie came to him this morning with some strange story; that he was very much upset, and said he must go down to the north at once. I never,' said Mrs Suffield anxiously, 'never knew him do a thing like that before—go off without telling me what was the matter.'

While Isabel is talking with her aunt, it is necessary that we should occupy ourselves with this business of M'Fie's. He had come to the house betimes that morning, looking—as the footman said to his master—'very hill, indeed, sir—wuss than usual, and 'is 'ead tied hup!'

The Tame Philosopher had, for once, a story to tell instead of a rhapsody to deliver. But his manner of narration partook largely of the

rhapsodical from sheer habit; for certainly he was too much moved and too much in earnest to be consciously choosing his words.

'Bless my soul!' exclaimed Suffield when he saw how pale he looked with his head tied up in a white handkerchief. 'What in the world have you been doing with yourself?'

'Ah, my dear sir,' said M'Fie, wringing his patron's hand, 'the pains of Gehenna have gat hold upon me! I have had an adventure, sir, which to my poor experience in that kind surpasses everything I have ever read of *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*—of barbers, and negroes, and one-eyed calenders. It is so strange that you cannot imagine it even in dimmest, most indefinite predigrement. And when I tell it to you, you are likely to listen with incredulous ear.'

'Well, my friend,' said Suffield, 'I make no promise of listening with one sort of ear or another; but I must bargain that you tell me only the truth. Come into the library.'

'What is truth?' said jesting Pilate,' quoted M'Fie, as he followed his patron, "and would not stay for an answer." I would have you observe, sir,' said he, when they were in the library, 'that I am about to give you an unvarnished narrative of my adventure, and I have to bespeak your earnest attention, because it concerns yourself, sir.'

'Concerns me—does it? Well, fire away, and let me hear.'

The Philosopher was too much interested in his adventure even to correct his patron's unliterary expression. He began his narrative, and Suffield listened with interest. In effect it was as follows:

On Thursday evening—that was Tuesday—the Philosopher, having his time on his hands while his patron was making holiday in Lancashire, and having read in the newspapers of the success of his young friend Ainsworth's play, resolved that he would spend half-a-crown for a seat in the pit to witness the play and judge if the approval of the public was justified. When he took his place in the throng waiting for the doors to open, he observed a little way in front of him a white turban. When he had pushed his way in and taken possession of a seat, he found himself immediately behind the white turban. While studying his bill of the play and his halfpenny newspaper, and considering the talk and the countenances of his neighbours before the play began, he negligently observed that the owner of the white turban—who, he could casually see, had the dark face of an Indian or Hindu—kept taking surreptitious sucks at a bottle which he produced from the pocket of the dark overcoat he wore. The play began, and he was interested in it, and incurious about the owner of the white turban, who had seemed progressing so rapidly on the way to tipsiness. But at the end of the first act, when all around began to discuss the play, the owner of the white turban began also. He addressed himself to his neighbour, a harmless, good-natured-seeming young man, who rather encouraged than resented his conversation.

'This is silliness,' said the white turban. 'I am regret that I give away my half-the-crown to sit here to listen with regard to this. Do you

think the same, sir? I must say the times the halls of music visited I pay one shilling—not half-the-crown!—and I am handy for the pipe and the glass, and I am not squeeze by my respected ones next me. With regard this is not good, not economical. And in the halls of music they make me laugh down to my stomach, with regard here if care should be taken I make a simpler of pleasure. This is silliness!’

There was no mistaking that guileless voice and that wonderful turn for correct English: a single peep round the dark man's cheek assured the Philosopher that the owner of the white turban was none other than Daniel Trichinopoly.

‘Of course—Daniel,’ said Suffield. ‘Taking his Christmas holiday in London, and enjoying himself in his own way.—But how, my friend, does that concern me? My son told me he was in London.’

‘Oh, did he?’ said the Philosopher. ‘Well, my dear sir, I am not at the end of my story yet. Wait, sir, and listen.’

At the end of the second act—during which Daniel frequently partook of his private refreshment—the same kind of talk was resumed, Daniel adding to such comparative criticism as he had before uttered that he knew the gentleman who had ‘made’ the play, and that he hoped that he and his friends were well, and that they would continue very well. As for him (Daniel) he did not care for anybody: he could spend his ‘half-the-crown’ or his ‘one shilling’ with as much freedom as any ‘Ki-lis-tian’ gentleman in the Queen’s empire, and—with that the play went on again.

‘Still I don’t see, my friend,’ said Suffield, ‘what the tipsy twaddle talked by Black Daniel has to do with me.’

‘My dear sir,’ said the Philosopher, ‘you will see in a precious moment.’

It was after the third act that Daniel—being then very tipsy and communicative—drew from his inner pocket a large envelope, from which he took some folded sheets of tissue-paper. He spread them before his neighbour, and boasted of the value of the drawings on them.

‘I beg to mention,’ said Daniel, ‘that these pictures, lines, circles, etcetera, etcetera—in red ink and in black—are with regard to a very clever machine valuable for the manufacture. With attention to these I now take away and make, and I may say I shall have a small or large fortune by the favour of it.’

A strong suspicion made the Philosopher rise to look at these drawings over Daniel’s shoulder. He discovered that the lines had clearly been first traced with pencil and then gone over with ink by a somewhat awkward hand, and that they were undoubtedly copies of drawings he had seen before. What drawings?

‘Now, what drawings would you guess, sir, in your acutest and directest vein of guessing?’

‘What drawings should they be,’ asked Suffield, ‘that I know ought about? What should be done wi’ a sheep’s head but make broth o’t?’

‘Mr Suffield,’ said the Philosopher, ‘with listening to the havers of fools and rogues in Parliament, I must tell you your wits have become dulled. Your business activity, since it ceased to be active, has lost its sharpness. What drawings should they be that I’d take trouble to tell you this

screed of a story about but the drawings of your own cherished, secret machine?’

‘What? The black scoundrel! He has copied the drawings, has he? That’s George’s carelessness!—But go on wi’ thy story. What didst thou do?’

The Philosopher answered, he could do nothing there and then; but he considered that, since Daniel had stolen copies of the drawings for use, he could hardly intend to return to his post in Lancashire. Waiting, therefore, till the play was over, he followed the white turban from the theatre and down the Strand to Chancery Lane, where it mounted to the top of an omnibus going eastward, and he followed. The Philosopher confessed that he had no thought of committing violence—even if he had been able—he was only steadily resolved to see where the black Daniel was going to bestow himself. On the ‘bus they sat almost back to back, and the Philosopher could not but imagine that a powerful man might just twist himself round in his seat, put his arm about, and garrotte the head that wore the white turban, and abstract the large envelope from the inner pocket. Thus they rode eastward and still eastward, Daniel murmuring to himself without ceasing all the way. Somewhere in Whitechapel—the Philosopher could not tell where—the white turban descended from the ‘bus, and the Philosopher followed. He followed along strange alleys by queer turnings, slippery and noisome, until he began to suspect that the white turban was aware it was followed; how it had become aware the Philosopher could not guess; but the Philosopher had never before tried to be a detective. The white turban twisted this way and that, and now and then drew up in a pause, when the Philosopher drew up, too, and caught the gleam of a bright eye from under the turban. At length the white turban disappeared into a doorway; the Philosopher moved carefully up to observe the number, when the white turban pounced out upon him, the hands of Daniel gripped his arms to his sides, and the voice of Daniel murmured: ‘Ah, it is the old Guru! It is the sayer of wise things! It is the wise one himself alone without his disciple! I am regret to say that my entertainment is very little for a Guru. But with regards come to see where I have the dwelling.’

There was that in Daniel’s eye and manner which hinted that his invitation was not to be refused; and the Philosopher, who was not a man of great physical courage, yielded to the gentle urgency and pressure of Daniel’s muscular black hands, and went along with him, saying: ‘Certainly; I will look at your dwelling.’

‘Do you know what you should have done?’ said Suffield, who was now marching up and down the room. ‘You should have called a policeman, and given him in charge for being in possession of property of which he could not give a reasonable account. That would have nailed him.’

‘But,’ said the Philosopher, ‘there was no policeman to be seen: it was a terrible savage region!’

‘I mean,’ said Suffield, ‘you should have done that as soon as you left the theatre, instead of following him all the way to the Docks; that, I suppose, is whereabouts you were?’

'Not quite,' answered the Philosopher. 'But I should have denounced him to a man in blue at once—should I? I did not know,' said he despondently. 'I am not familiar with the methods of dealing with crime and its detection. And the whole business,' he added with a flash of virtuous indignation, 'was as smoke in the eyes and stench in the nostrils!'

'However,' said Suffield, 'go on wi' thy story.'

The Philosopher passed on, while Daniel guided him by the arm into a narrow court or alley. They went on, stumbling in darkness and dirt, until they arrived at a door above which was a small oil-lamp. Daniel lifted the catch and walked in, and the Philosopher to his amazement saw he was in a place like the fore-castle of a ship. The room was filled with a peculiar brown vapour or smoke, such as the Philosopher had never before seen, smelt, or tasted.

'Opium,' said Suffield.

'And that is just what it was, my dear sir,' said the Philosopher.

Daniel entered into converse in an unintelligible tongue with the Chinese master of the place, who came and bowed and grinned before the Philosopher, and said: 'Come; smokee pipee. Velly cheap; not velly dear!' The Philosopher protested that he did not wish to smoke a pipe of the noxious drug; that while thanking his 'friend' for the offer he would much rather not. But the Chinese master of the place insisted with Celestial politeness, and took the Philosopher by the sleeve to lead him along. The Philosopher resisted, and angrily remonstrated, while sundry dark heads with lack-lustre eyes lolled over the edge of certain bunks. At that he received a blow on the head, which made him drop, stunned: he believed the treacherous Daniel had dealt it.

'Humph!' exclaimed Suffield. 'And that accounts, I suppose, for the clout about your head. And you saw the Daniel Nathaniel no more. I thought that was to be the end!'

'But that, my dear sir,' said M'Fie, 'was not quite the end. I came to myself'—

'It was the end so far as Daniel was concerned,' said Suffield, still marching up and down. 'He had got rid of you. And you came to yourself, I'll be bound, with being made to swallow opium smoke or a bit of opium; and they kept you there sick and sleepy, and you did not get out of that for some time.'

'Now,' exclaimed the Philosopher, 'it is very clever of you to guess that; for that is just what occurred. The Celestial person made me smoke one, two pipes of his obnoxious preparation, and I could not leave the place till late in the afternoon of Sunday.'

'Sunday! Of course!' said Suffield. 'That was all arranged! The Daniel creature wanted to get away, and to make sure that you could not come and tell me or any one else that you had seen him until he had time to do something! Where can he have gone? Why didn't you let me know at once, my friend?'

'I thought, my dear sir,' answered the alarmed Philosopher, 'that you were still in Lancashire. I wrote to your son as soon as I got back to my lodgings; and then I came here to-day, thinking that peradventure you might have heard, and come back.'

'You wrote to George! And he knows then!'

—if he's at home!—That rascal Daniel must be found, you know! I must go to the police!—You'd better come with me.'

They went out together at once, took a cab, and drove to Scotland Yard. The Detective-Inspector to whom they were introduced saw clearly the importance of the matter.

'The thing's not patented, you see,' said Suffield; 'and if it is made public, or if it gets into another manufacturer's hands, it means thousands of pounds loss to my business. So spend as you think necessary to find the black scoundrel.'

'You do not know yet,' asked the Inspector, 'if he has taken anything else?'

'I can't tell till I've seen my son, who has been managing the business. Where can the creature mean to go to?'

'Back to his own country, probably,' said the Inspector. 'But is it of any use his taking plans of machines there? He may have gone to the States; but Liverpool would have been better for that. Yet—haven't I heard that they are building cotton mills in Bombay now?'

'They are,' answered Suffield; 'and depend on it that's where he's gone!'

'Very likely,' said the Inspector; 'but we must look all round.'

Suffield returned to Rutland Gate to eat his lunch with little appetite—and to tell his wife what had happened—to get a few things packed into a portmanteau and to take the train for Lancashire.

HOW TO JOIN THE ROYAL NAVY.

IN these days of keen competition for employment, when men of moderate means scarcely know what to do with their sons, it is surprising to find how comparatively few parents are acquainted with the rules governing the admission of candidates to the public services. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why boys who display no very strong bent for any particular calling so frequently follow in their fathers' footsteps. Sometimes the sons of well-known professional men do succeed in the same line; more commonly they attain but moderate success; but it is indisputable that young Englishmen very often follow the parental lead simply because *Paterfamilias* has neglected, until too late in the day, to study the rules of entry to other professions. How often one finds, for example, that a military officer puts several sons into the army, that lawyers' sons are trained to be lawyers, and that a clergyman's sons drift into the Church; and how very, very frequently in after-life the unsuccessful man has cause to regret his father's lack of imagination. According to Mr Beerbohm-Tree, this desirable quality is highly developed in actors, yet it is notorious that actors' children usually take to the stage. Now, there is at least one profession open to young English lads which is not, strictly speaking, overcrowded. We allude to the Royal Navy; and although we may fairly claim to be the greatest maritime power the world has ever seen, there can be no doubt that universal ignorance prevails among civilians as to the rules of entry to this attractive service. Our object in the following paper is to give parents

some authentic and definite information on this subject.

When we hear that young hopeful is going to adopt a naval career, we usually assume that his ambition is to become a British admiral—perhaps even a second Nelson. This is indeed a very laudable ambition; but whilst there are only a few admirals—at all events on the active list—there are several other branches of the service open to lads with an inclination for a sea-life. The combatant or executive branch of the navy affords greater opportunities for distinction than the non-combatant; but although there are more prizes in the former, there are also more blanks; and many a soured old lieutenant, with no prospect of further promotion, has wished, ere now, that he had adopted one of the other branches of his profession. These other branches are as follows: The Royal Marines, Engineering branch, Accountant department, Chaplains' department, Naval Instructors' department, and Medical branch.

The Combatant branch.—Every young man who aspires to become a combatant naval officer is required to pass an examination for admission to the Cadets' training-ship at Dartmouth. This system was established in 1859; but it is noteworthy that the system of open competition—introduced into the army on the abolition of purchase by Mr Gladstone—has never been fully extended to the navy. The entry of naval cadets, for example, is regulated by strictly limited competition, and this is effected by issuing nominations. The Admiralty are now entering about one hundred and twenty cadets annually, and this number is likely to be maintained for some years to come, owing to the deficiency of lieutenants. The examinations of nominated candidates are held twice a year, and not more than three candidates are usually permitted to compete for each vacancy. As may be imagined, these nominations are eagerly sought for, but often too late by parents who are unacquainted with the rules. We must not pause here to criticise the system under which the nominations are bestowed, but cannot refrain from stating that it is distinctly open to criticism and unlikely to last many years longer. It is sufficient for our purpose to explain that, with a few exceptions, all the nominations are in the gift of the First Lord of the Admiralty. The individual members of the Admiralty Board have a few at their disposal; whilst every admiral is allowed one nomination on his appointment to a command, and every captain can also claim one nomination within six months of assuming his first command. If one has no connection with the navy, the only chance of securing a nomination for a cadetship is to make early application to the First Lord of the Admiralty, or to enlist the sympathies of some influential friend. It must be admitted, however, that this branch of the navy is still a close preserve.

Candidates for the 'Britannia' are required to pass the examination between the ages of thirteen and fourteen and a half years; and some special preparation—in other words, cramming—is invariably required. The test is not a difficult one; but as there are not fewer than three candidates for each vacancy, it is necessary to obtain more than merely qualifying marks. From six months to a year's cramming is usually needed for an

average youth whose previous education has not been absolutely neglected; but even clever boys should be sent to one of the crammers for a few months. It would be beyond the scope of this article to give any particulars of the subsequent examinations to be passed by a cadet before he is fairly launched on his naval career. We need merely state that although a naval officer has many tests to pass before he attains the rank of Lieutenant, these examinations present few obstacles to young men of average ability, owing to the excellent system of training.

We may now pass on to the rules governing admission to the other branches of the navy.

The Royal Marines.—This is a distinct and also a combatant branch of the naval service, and although the officers are virtually soldiers, they are under the control of the Admiralty, and are paid out of the naval votes. The Royal Marines are divided into two separate corps, the Artillery and the Light Infantry, the officers of the former receiving special training in artillery-work. The Royal Marines affords a very good career, and is much less expensive than the Army, only a small allowance being needed by officers in the junior ranks. But we have no space to draw any comparisons between the advantages of the different branches of the navy, and must assume some knowledge on these points on the part of our readers. Candidates for the Royal Marine Artillery are required to pass the same examination as those for the Royal Artillery, and this is the only branch of the navy, except the Engineers, which is open to general competition. Candidates must compete between the ages of sixteen and eighteen years. The number of vacancies rarely exceeds six in each year; but although this appears to indicate keen competition, the bulk of the successful candidates elect to enter the Royal Artillery in preference to the Marines. Still, the test is a very severe one, for, as we have explained, the standard of knowledge is precisely the same as that required for admission to Woolwich. The successful marine artillery candidates are subsequently trained at the Royal Naval College, and at the naval gunnery and torpedo schools. They do not go through Woolwich at all.

Candidates for the Royal Marine Light Infantry are also entered by open competition, and are required to compete with the Sandhurst candidates. This system ensures the entry of young men of the same mental capacity as the future officers of the infantry of the line. Hitherto, the limits of age have been between seventeen and twenty; but this summer the maximum has been reduced by one year. Candidates for this branch of the navy are required to be not less than five feet five inches in height. The number of vacancies offered half-yearly has varied of late between four and ten, according to the flow of promotion in the corps. The successful candidates are gazetted to the three Marine Divisions at Portsmouth, Chatham, and Plymouth, and are usually attached to the same division throughout, except when serving afloat. The two branches of the Royal Marines make up a force of fourteen thousand officers and men.

The Naval Engineering branch.—The entry to this branch of the navy, which has greatly in-

creased in importance of late years, is regulated by open competition; but the Admiralty reserve the right of nominating candidates for one-third of the vacancies. These nominated candidates are admitted if successful in obtaining qualifying marks, and are not required to compete, in the ordinary sense of the term. The nominations are exclusively bestowed upon the sons of naval or military officers killed or injured in the public service. Three nominations are also offered to the sons of colonial gentlemen, with the object of tightening the bonds between the mother-country and her colonies, and bringing about what Mr Morley might describe as a naval 'union of hearts.' Including these nominated candidates, from thirty to thirty-four engineer students are entered annually, and the competition is about five to one. The age of admission is between fourteen and seventeen, and cramming is considered necessary, although no technical subjects are included in the examination. The students are educated at Keyham College, near Devonport, and here they remain between four and six years, according to their progress. During this course of training, parents are required to pay forty pounds per annum. A student's outfit costs about twenty pounds; and the total fees, including washing, amount to under seventy pounds. In return for this moderate outlay, the students receive a first-rate technical education; so thorough, indeed, that it has been found necessary to guard against the possibility of parents subsequently withdrawing their sons from the navy with a view of making them civil engineers.

There is also another way of becoming a naval engineer, and for this method of entry candidates are eligible up to twenty-three years of age. They are required to pass an examination for direct admission as assistant-engineers, but are not accepted unless they have previously undergone three years' training in an approved engineering establishment. About ten such appointments are offered annually; but very few engineers enter the navy through this channel, very possibly because the regulations on this head are imperfectly understood.

Medical branch.—The rules governing the admission of surgeons to the navy may be briefly dismissed. The candidate must be fully qualified to practise medicine and surgery in the United Kingdom, and must be under twenty-eight years of age. The exigences of competition have, however, led to the necessity of imposing further tests, the vacancies being awarded in order of merit by the examining Board. The competition varies so much that it would be difficult to estimate accurately the average number of candidates. In 1888, only seven surgeons were entered; but the average number of vacancies has been twenty-two during the past four years. The medical officers of the navy receive higher pay than the combatant and engineer officers of corresponding rank, and the regulations governing retirement are framed on a liberal scale. This is chiefly due to the influence of the medical profession on shore, which, some years ago, successfully resorted to the expedient of boycotting the navy, until the Admiralty were forced to make concessions. After eight years' service, a naval surgeon has the option of retiring on a gratuity of one thousand pounds; and after

twenty years' service, he can claim a pension of £365 per annum. Higher pensions than this can, however, be obtained by additional service, and by officers who rise to the top of their profession.

Naval Chaplains.—There are probably thousands of struggling clergymen in this country who would be glad to join the navy as chaplains, and it is certain that a great number of applications are received by the Admiralty when a vacancy occurs. The superabundant supply of candidates is no doubt partially attributable to the fact that no examination has to be passed, although perhaps this would be the fairest way of deciding the claims of clerical applicants. There are only ninety-six naval chaplains, including the Chaplain of the Fleet; but during the past ten years we find that, on an average, five fresh appointments have been gazetted. These posts are in the gift of the Admiralty, and a good deal of interest is required to obtain a chaplaincy. The pay of a naval chaplain begins at twelve shillings a day, and increases to four hundred pounds per annum; whilst those who are also qualified to act as naval instructors receive considerably higher pay. Like all other officers of the navy, chaplains are entitled to pensions; but no pension is granted for less than ten years' service, except in cases of injury sustained on duty. It may be interesting to mention that naval chaplains formerly ranked with rear-admirals, although the pay was no higher than at present—but that nowadays they do not take rank at all, the regulations merely specifying that they are to be treated with the respect due to their sacred calling.

Naval Instructors.—The duties of a Naval Instructor are to instruct the midshipmen in sea-going vessels in mathematics and navigation; whilst a few are employed on board the cadets' training-ship, and also as lecturers at the Royal Naval College. Of late years, the policy of the Admiralty has been to combine the duties of chaplain and naval instructor in sea-going vessels; and the plan has worked so well, that it will no doubt be continued. More than half the chaplains have qualified as instructors; but a small number of naval instructors not in holy orders will always be required for the 'Britannia' and the Naval College. Several of the original naval instructors have become chaplains, just as the chaplains have qualified as instructors, although it may be considered that this is not a responsibility to be as lightly undertaken as the teaching of middies. Candidates for the position of naval instructor must be under thirty-five years of age, and are required to pass rather a severe examination in mathematics, Latin, and French; and the vacancies are offered for open competition. The successful candidates are subsequently sent to the Naval College to study navigation and a few other technical subjects, and are then subjected to a final examination. The pay of a naval instructor is the same as that of a chaplain, and pensions are granted on the same scale. The duties are light, and the naval instructor enjoys the status of a commissioned officer; but capable young schoolmasters are not greatly attracted, as a rule, by this branch of the navy, which has little beyond a fair pension to recommend it.

The Accountant or Paymaster branch.—The

officers of the Accountant branch are entered as assistant clerks, under the same system of limited competition that governs the admission of naval cadets—that is to say, nominations are required. The number of nominations issued by the Admiralty varies from year to year; but about four candidates are allowed to compete for each vacancy. Candidates are eligible for the examination between sixteen and eighteen years of age, and of late years about eighteen vacancies have been offered annually. The examination is not a difficult one, apart from the competition; but it is essential for candidates to be well grounded in arithmetic, elementary mathematics, and composition, and also in French. This branch of the navy can be entered at smaller expense than any other, and although the pay is not very good in the junior ranks, the Paymasters are well paid, and can retire on six hundred pounds a year after twenty-seven years' service in that rank.

In this paper no attempt has been made to do more than briefly describe the general rules governing the admission of officers to the several branches of the navy; but it is hoped even those few particulars will be of some service to parents with sons on their hands. Fuller particulars can always be obtained by application to the Secretary to the Admiralty; whilst much useful information will also be found in the quarterly issue of the 'Navy List.' It is perhaps scarcely necessary to add that candidates for every branch are required to pass a strict medical examination, and that robust health and normal physical powers are as essential to a future surgeon, paymaster, or engineer as to a midshipman or an admiral. To be sure, many officers lose their health, and sometimes even a limb, during service; but good physique at the outset is a *sine quâ non*. If Lord Nelson had lived half a century later, our greatest naval hero would probably have been disqualified by a medical Board, in which case many important events might have happened which need not here be discussed.

CHARLES GLEIG.

ELSIE.

CHAPTER II.

As time went on, I found myself thinking as much of young St John as of Elsie. He had come into the peace of our village life like a dragon-fly in a garden, giving one a sense of disquiet, which the butterflies and bees never do. I speak for myself, for every one else said how quiet and nice he was. Before a week was over, half the women in the place were in love with him, and I didn't wonder at it, though I got to hate his suave ways and his marvellous blue eyes. I knew which way they were turning, and that Elsie had looked into them, and had caught something from them which was altering her daily. He acted indeed like a sun on her: she seemed to grow taller, more queenly: her eyes took a soft dreaminess to them, and in the curves of her lips there was a richer swell.

For her sake I ought to have been glad that love had come to her with its creative touch, making the world all new again, and hallowing it with sweeter meanings, which before she had

never known. But all the while I had misgivings when I thought of the vicar's pride of birth—he was an Hon. Rev.—and the possibility that the young graduate was only butterflying after all. I misjudged him, as I came to know afterwards; but jealousy had twisted me, and my thoughts worked 'out of the true,' like a wheel on a bent axle.

But as far as Elsie was concerned she seemed happy enough, till the day after their picnic in the park, when something occurred which made my heart ache for her. I thought it was coming when the vicar passed on his way to the mill-house, for there was anger in his face and a hard uncharity quite foreign to it. In the space of twenty minutes, and while I was putting on my coat to leave, he reappeared, and with a lift of his hat came away. As he passed now his look was changed, and there was a beam of satisfaction in it, with a dash of sadness which set me all agog to know what it might mean.

I could only surmise, however, and wonder painfully how much it might concern the weal of Elsie. I was doing so at my fishing that night—for all taste for study had left me—when Henry came by with a spring in his step and a tune in his head, which he hummed gaily as he passed on his way to the mill. Some black-thorns screened me from the path, and I watched him till he disappeared behind the granary. The cherry orchard was beyond, and there Elsie, no doubt, was awaiting him. Here a fish gave a tug at the rod, and I landed a perch. I threw the line out anew, but couldn't keep still, through thinking of the tryst in the orchard; so I put up the tackle and went home.

Next day about two the Nemoton 'bus, instead of passing straight on, turned up the lane to the vicarage. It drove by presently with the two St Johns in it, and on its roof were three trunks marked in big white letters, 'H. ST J.' Jem had been repairing the millwheel since the morning, and crossed the road as the 'bus turned the corner.

'Summat wrong wi' young Missie this mornin', guv'nor,' said he. 'Her passed down brook-side just now, wi' t' collie, white as a daisy, an' arl red about the eyes, as if her'd bin cryin'. Th' old leddy's arl right too. Thought perhaps her'd had another fit and frightened the gell. That wheel o' theirn won't turn much longer, I'm thinkin'—it's gone reg'lar rotten, it has. Seems to me there ain't too much money movin' there, Mester Crannock.'

I went on with my planing, whistling a lame tune to myself, till, as thought joined thought, and one thing fitted into another, like mortise and tenon, my bile got the better of me, and I threw the plane down, telling Jem to jump into the sawpit. When we had done, and made lengths of a good-sized tree, Jem climbed out and wiped his face with a slow stare at me, which set me smiling; for quietness had come to me, and after three hours' distilling of it, I had found a soul of good in the evil that had happened. I told Jem to go home, and soon after went myself, and sat up till twelve o'clock that night book-reading.

Then I walked out in the stillness, and yielding to the inward pulling I could feel, went over to the millhouse, and gazed up at the little leaded

window of the room where Elsie had slept from a little one. I mounted the stile of the croft, and, under a tree-shadow which the moon made, sat listening to the weir, and castle-building on the ruins of her lost happiness. A little click came athwart it all, and I could see the casement swing outwards, and there was Elsie among the ivy, her hair all loose, and falling in brown waves on the whiteness of her bed dress. But her face was as white as it, as she looked up at the moon, her eyes glistening in its light like two dewdrops on a jonquil. There was a distraught eerie look in them which gave me an inward aching that she should take it so hard. Then she leaned her chin on her hands and gazed straight before her with a set stare. Presently her thoughts moved her lips, and became sounds in the stillness.

The broken sentences would look nothing on paper; nor is it for me to write down the doings of a maiden's soul when it comes forth in the solitude, thinking no one nigh to hear its soft plaints and its moanings. But as I listened, my head bowed, and my hope died away that I could ever turn such love to me, now that its tendrils had so wound round another's image. As well ask the brook to flow back from the river, or the flowers to look away from the sun in the morning. A cloud came between us and the moon, and when it had passed, Elsie's face was no longer in the ivy.

CHAPTER III.

But time brings its own heart-ease to those who will submit to its healing, and not nurse their wound as some mothers do dead babes. It went hard with Elsie for some months, as I could tell by the looks of her; but gradually her sick-visiting—to which she had turned, as sore hearts will—brought peace to her, and some of the roundness of feature which she had lost. The life took her out of herself, and gave play to all that was finest in her nature; so that, as time went on and she ripened to fuller womanhood, the beauty she had become less physical, and more the expression of a fine spirituality. It was not saintliness exactly—though Farmer Waghorn said she was an angel in woman's gear—for it was something her violin and her reading had given her as much as her good-doing. She was in that state when love and renunciation, working together, force the soul into sight of higher issues, towards which it grows because it must, or faint. I didn't think it then, but I do now.

I was one of those who shared in this larger life, though for a long time I felt that I was no more to her, as we walked together from church, or met on the brook-side, than any other son of Adam with whom she exchanged words as neighbourly. But gradually she became more careless of the reserve behind which worked her inner nature, and we grew more visible one to the other, though I strove always to hide my secret for fear of frightening her off, and she said nothing of hers, appearing seldom to think of it but only of what we talked on.

Then hope grew big within me; and I worked on with a will and a good heart, careless of the meaning in her great wistful eyes, or of the weird throbbing melodies which came sometimes

from her violin as she played in the twilight across the soft murmur of the weir.

She was playing so one June evening as I lingered by the granary on my way to the brook-side—which was my favourite walk, because, perhaps, it was hers—when Dobson, the mill foreman, joined me. Something in his face made me look again at him.

'Some strange talk at "Crown" to-night, Garge,' said he, walking on beside me with eyes straight in front of him.

'Do they all look as sour as you on it?' I asked, ill-humouredly, for I wanted to be alone just then.

'Look sour, do I?—Well, I ain't that: I'm downright sorry, lad. One o' Lawyer Sharp's men is there, half-seas over, an' he's let it all out. There's goin' to be a meetin' o' creditors. It's Higgins's doin'—the corn factor. He put in a writ; an' the others got wind of it, an' they arl swooped down like a lot o' kites on a lame sparrer. If he'd on'y bided his time a bit, there'd a' bin no harm done: there's plenty o' money out, on'y it's a bit tight.'

I stood still in surprise, and he stopped too, and across the momentary silence came the wail of Elsie's fiddle.

'Do you mean that there's money enough out to pay all debts?' said I, stepping on again.

'I'm pretty sure on't,' said Dobson. 'Higgins on'y did it 'cos her refused to give him a bill o' sale on the mill. He's had his wall eyes on th' old place these ten years or more. He's for pushing things to bankruptcy now, so as he may buy it up and run it hisself. Rawlins thinks so, and so do I.'

Rawlins was Mrs Onslow's clerk and manager, and I asked Dobson where he was. He told me, and I sought him out. Half an hour later I was in Mrs Onslow's parlour. She rose, in her quiet lady-like way, with some surprise in her face, which always had in it the half-dazed look of a confirmed epileptic. Saying nothing of what I had heard, I asked her at once whether I might put four hundred pounds in the business—three-fourths payable at once, and the remainder in a month. Higgins's debt was two hundred and sixty pounds. I watched her closely while the offer worked its way well into her mind. She was a proud woman, and unwilling to state how things were. At last she said—and I remember the shake in her voice—that she would accept the offer subject to her and my lawyer's approval, after conferring together on the value of the business.

'That'll be all right, ma'am,' said I heartily. 'I'll go to Nemoton in the morning and see the pair of them. Maybe you'd like to send some written instructions by me.'

She took the hint, and started to write a line or two to Mr Sharp; but seeing her hand was unsteady and something trickle down on to the paper, I took my leave hastily, saying I would call again in an hour's time. I did so; and Elsie and her mother were there together, waiting with glad faces to see me. It was the happiest night of my life; and when sleeping-time came, I hardly got a wink through thinking of Elsie's smiles, and the kiss of her hand she allowed me to take when I held it in mine for the parting.

The upshot was that Higgins was paid, and the other creditors argued into good sense at a private meeting we called. And when the mill-wheel had turned another three months or so things were all safe again, and I—I was engaged to Elsie.

Ay, it is true; and I was the blithest man in Norton Priors or anywhere thereabouts. How it happened would take too long to tell, and, moreover, I have little heart to do it, as I look back now and recall the foolishness of my Paradise. It was nothing else; for all the while it was not me she loved at all, but Henry St John, who had taken orders, and avowed himself a celibate, as some do. But she had given him up, as I well knew; and there was enough affection in her manner to make me believe that I had won my way into her heart, and not only into its vestibule. She was a gentle loving thing to all about her; and I believe now that she took me only out of kindness, seeing me so far gone that she hadn't the courage to say nay to my pleading. Then Mrs Onslow helped it along, having taken a fancy to me, and seeing in the match, perhaps, good likelihood of happiness to Elsie. I was to go and live at the mill-house, and after a time to leave off wheelwrighting and manage the business, Rawlins having grown a bit old and 'dotty,' as we said in our parts. And so it was planned out, and love shone all about it, and I was no more capable of seeing spot or blur in the picture than the sun is of seeing darkness. Yet it was only a vision and a vain thing.

SOME NEW ZEALAND PECULIARITIES.

For so small a country it is remarkable what a variety of climates New Zealand presents, and how gradually the one merges into the other. In the extreme south—say in Stewart Island, or round Invercargill—we have the four seasons, in one of which the enthusiastic Scot may even enjoy 'the Roaring Game.' But as one proceeds northwards the climate becomes gradually milder and milder, until, in the district around the Bay of Islands, we have an almost tropical climate, with only two seasons—dry and rainy—no snow, no frost, but a land for the orange and citron, the banana and the guava. Yet all this variety falls within a very limited range of temperature. There are no extremes; and, in truth, winter is a name rather than a reality for all the North Island and the South Island too. The cause of this tempered climate is due to its configuration and position. It resembles Italy in shape—long and very narrow; stretching north and south a length of eleven hundred miles; whilst its extreme breadth is no more than one hundred and forty miles. To project such a country in the northern hemisphere, it would stretch, say, from the centre of France over Spain and the Mediterranean into the middle of Morocco. On account of its narrowness, no part is distant more than seventy-five miles from the sea; and it lies out far in the bosom of the Pacific Ocean.

The ocean swell that ceaselessly dashes itself against the east coast can travel with an unbroken course more than four thousand miles from the coast of South America; while on the

west side Australia is the nearest mass of land—twelve hundred miles off. It is therefore essentially a maritime country, and it is this surrounding expanse of water that tempers so delightfully its climate and supplies it with such abundant moisture, that it compares favourably with Australia, where often man and beast languish under the sweltering, scorching heat and long droughts that dry up vegetation until it is ready to fall into dust. It is never blighted by land-winds such as blow from Africa upon Italy, or even from the Continent upon Great Britain. It is pre-eminently a land of coolness and greenness, where grass and bush all the year round wear a living vivid green. So mild and equable a climate as this allows the colonials, one might say, to live an outdoor life. Even in the night-time they can scarcely be said to be confined, as open windows and the slight framework of their wooden houses give free access to fresh air.

Nowhere can one obtain more beneficial conditions for maintaining or recovering health. The tables of flourishing life-insurance companies attest this general healthiness, and a story widely reported illustrates it. A judge of a rather testy but withal humorous disposition, who had presided over a large district in Otago for seventeen years, was asked by official authorities to make out certain returns about the mortality of the district. His answer was that there was no death-rate for his district, for during the past seventeen years there had occurred only two deaths, and these were of strangers, one of whom was murdered, and the other hanged for the murder.

This isolated position of New Zealand has, however, this manifest disadvantage, that the colonist has to go far to find a market for his produce. Yet science has to a great extent bridged this difficulty, and enables him to compete profitably in the home-market. Its application to practical purposes has no more remarkable instance than the process of refrigeration applied to preserving meat. All the mail steamers are now fitted up with chambers which can hold from twenty to thirty thousand carcasses. The Gear Freezing Company allowed for a small sum—less than one pound—the privilege of sending a frozen carcass to one's home-friends. It was greatly taken advantage of, particularly at Christmas time, so as to provide the Christmas dinner with the novelty of 'lamb' instead of the ordinary turkey.

Again, this complete isolation of New Zealand affords undoubtedly an explanation of many of its peculiarities in animal and plant life. No animal of the larger type is found in New Zealand. Indeed, the only native quadruped—and even that is doubtful—is a small rat called 'kiori' by the Maoris. This rat and two kinds of bats are the only representatives of land mammals. On the other hand, there are a good many kinds of moths, butterflies, and gnats, but only two insects. It teems with such life on the borders of the bush. The writer well remembers how one hot summer evening, when the windows were thrown open, the moth tribe thronging in, heaped themselves upon the light until it was stifled—a holocaust celebrated by the trumpeting 'ping' of half-a-dozen mosquitoes. The only other active and therefore vicious insect beside

the mosquito is the sandfly; but its activity is confined to the daytime.

Native birds are very interesting, though, like the Maoris themselves, they are becoming rarer and rarer. The moa is already supposed to be extinct, and we know it only from its vast skeleton and egg, to be seen in the colonial museums. There are, however, still existing two birds of the moa kind, though on a diminutive scale: these are the weka and kiwi—both provided with only the most rudimentary form of wings. The weka is an intensely curious bird, with more oddities and greater knowingness than even Barnaby Rudge's raven. But the best loved of all is the 'tui.' Once one has heard its clear liquid bell-tones, on the fall and rise of which one's very soul hangs, it will never be forgotten. Young New Zealand calls it the 'Parson Bird,' by reason of the white spot on its breast, representing, as it were, the cleric choker. Besides these, there are a few varieties of hawk and parrot kind.

Its reptiles are confined to a few varieties of the lizard, and these are quite harmless, although held in great terror by the Maoris. Among all these animals there is no one dangerous to man. Perhaps exception should be made in the case of the katipo, a small dark spider with a red spot, the bite of which is said to be highly venomous. It is very rare, and we never had the satisfaction of falling in with it.

But surely the most curious of all objects is that which the Maoris call 'aweto.' One is uncertain whether to call it an animal or a plant. In the first stage of its existence it is simply a caterpillar about three or four inches in length, and always found in connection with the rata tree, a kind of flowering myrtle. It appears that when it reaches full growth, it buries itself two or three inches underground, where, instead of undergoing the ordinary chrysalis process, it becomes gradually transformed into a plant, which exactly fills the body, and shoots up at the neck to a height of eight or ten inches. This plant resembles in appearance a diminutive bulrush; and the two, animal and plant, are always found inseparable. One is apt to relegate it to the domain of imagination, among dragons and mermaids; but then its existence and nature have been accepted by the late Frank Buckland. How it propagates its species is a mystery. One traveller, after describing its dual nature, calmly states that it is the grub of the night butterfly. If so, then the grub must also become a butterfly, or what becomes of the species? One would be ready to suppose that the grub does really so, and that some fungus finds the cast-off slough congenial quarters for its growth. But as far as present observation, the grub never becomes a butterfly, but is changed in every case into a plant.

This singular deficiency in animal economy furnishes the Maoris with a plausible excuse for their past cannibalistic practices. We must suppose that the absence is due to the isolation of these islands, for there are no natural conditions antagonistic to animal life. On the contrary, nowhere has acclimatisation been so successful as in New Zealand. All kinds of animals from the house-fly up to the horse have been introduced, and have flourished and multiplied in an almost miraculous manner. Early settlers

tell us that the few pigs set loose by Captain Cook at Gisborne had increased to such an extent as to overrun the whole of the North Island, and were eagerly hunted by the Maoris. It is well known how the country's permanent prosperity depends upon its unique adaptability for raising the sheep, cow, and horse. You can now get a good riding hack for three or four pounds.

All home birds are quite common—too common for the farmer's liking. Though most of the rivers have been stocked with trout, there has been a hitch in the introduction of the salmon. The ova are hatched, and the young fry, full of vigour and life, make their way to the sea; but they never return. What becomes of them is uncertain.

The bee has had a wonderful history. The whole country swarms with them; yet, according to Mr Froude's account, they are all the offspring of two hives taken out by Cotton of Christchurch. It is told that he was accustomed to keep them in his sitting-room, and they had become so attached and familiar with his person, that a squad of them used to attend him at lectures and chapel. However this may be, we know from personal experience that the rate at which they multiply is marvellous. In a township of Wellington, a colonist had got a chance swarm about the beginning of the season, and by the end he had several swarms from this single hive. In the following season they simply poured forth until all available boxes and barrels about the steading were exhausted, and then swarm after swarm was allowed to take flight. These would find a habitat in the bush, which is rapidly becoming as rich in stores of honey as the prairies and backwoods of America. Indeed, bee-hunting would be quite profitable, were not honey so plentiful and cheap.

The acclimatisation of animals in New Zealand has not been without some curious changes in the structure and habits. All of them seem to breed oftener and to attain a much larger size. The average weight of the sheep is sixty-eight pounds, double that of the home-sheep, and its fleece is twice as large. Trout are often caught more than thirty pounds, and they seem to take as well to sea-water as to fresh. Many birds that lived on insects in the home-country have become quite destructive to the colonist's crops. The lark here often sings during the night, and has become so indolent that it perches upon the fence whilst it sings. This change of natural instinct has been shown in a curious manner in the case of the kea, a native bird. It is a common parrot, green and brown in colour, and, until some years ago, a strict vegetarian. All at once it developed a strong taste for the fat that surrounds the sheep's kidneys. It attacks the live animal, and tearing open with its strong bill the side of the helpless sheep, it gorges itself, and then leaves the animal to die.

The glory of New Zealand is not its hot springs, with terraces; not the wild and weird scenery of its sounds and highlands. These are certainly grand; but the unique wonder is its 'bush.' And, reader, if you desire to behold this wonder, you must make haste, for fire and axe are making sad havoc, and in a few years naught will be left but unsightly charred stumps. But let us hope at least that ere its disappearance

some poet will arise to sing its grandeur and beauty, and to give articulation to the mysterious sighs and sounds that issue from its depths. Take your stand upon this grassy hillock, that has long ago been cleared; and, lifting your eyes northward, you behold a sea of foliage with no very bright colours, but dark, cool, and vividly green. Starting from the bottom of the hillock, it surges onwards until, some leagues away, it beats against a hill-range; but this forms no barrier to its onward progress, for its heights are scaled; and this forest, I may tell you, unbroken save by a small clearing called Norsewood, a Scandinavian settlement, merges into what is termed 'the Forty Mile Bush'—a piece of bushland well known to stagecoach travellers. This bush is quite unlike that of Australia. It is Australian bush plus a dense jungle impervious to wind and sunshine. Mighty pines of many kinds, the rata, totara, rimu, and others, raise aloft their heads from one to two hundred feet. The space between their trunks is closely packed by festoons of creeping plants, wild vines, supplejacks, and other parasitic vegetation. There, too, you see the graceful fern-trees raising aloft their slender dark stems from twenty to forty feet; you see the long sword-blade leaves of the nikau, the only palm of New Zealand; and most beautiful of all, and certainly the most characteristic feature of New Zealand forest-land, the tuft-topped cabbage-tree. These three plants give a peculiar tropical look to New Zealand scenery, and at once impress the immigrant with the remembrance how he is in a strange and distant land—a fact which otherwise one is apt to forget in New Zealand.

Now turn and look southwards. What a different scene! Naught but a waste of charred stump and blackened trunks, with here and there a tree standing, grimly raising its blasted arms to the heavens, as it were in condemnation of man's desecration and vandalism. A more desolate and disheartening sight one can nowhere see! Yes; that is what the settler accomplishes with his two instruments—axe and fire. But you may be assured that he looks upon the scene from a far different point of view, and not without cause, because it is a herculean toil to attack that impenetrable bush, and requires a stout heart with a vast amount of energy and hopefulness to carry the clearing operation to a successful issue. The bush-feller is full of expedients to lessen his labour. He makes use, for instance, of the larger trees to knock over others in their vicinity half cut through; and then he attacks the tree, not at the root, but as high as he can reach, so that stumps four or five feet in height are left. When the felled timber is thoroughly dry, he sets fire to it; and if he gets a successful 'burn,' when the rain comes on he sows his grass seed, and in a few days the tender grass springs up in a marvellous way out of the fertilising ashes, and by the end of winter his land is ready to be 'stocked.' The bush-land once cleared, compensates him for his toil and hardship. He has secured a present competence and an ample field for the employment of his family, however numerous. Then each year adds to the value of his property.

In the best of communities there is always found more than a sufficiency of black-sheep, and

New Zealand is no exception. But there has recently been a great diminution in the number of criminal offences, so much so, that many are quite sanguine that crime shall die out altogether or become very rare. The most thoughtful ascribe this result to the influence of their thorough educational system. The experiment of a 'First Offenders Act' was first tried in New Zealand, and though laughed and jeered at as a piece of absurdity and sentimentalism, its results, both from an economic and moral point of view, have been highly satisfactory, and now the mother-country is following in the footsteps of her child. Occasionally, indeed, a Cassandra voice is heard denouncing the rowdiness, or, as they style it, the 'larrikinism,' that is becoming more and more prevalent throughout the country. The young colonist, overfed on meat and 'flown with insolence' and high spirits, if not with wine, is apt to become a source of annoyance to his neighbour and to those who come in contact with him; but for the most part these irrepressible high spirits of his find an outlet in the more violent form of recreation, such as football, rowing, horse-racing, and the like.

New Zealand is the workman's paradise, where the four eights, so longed for by radical reformers, are a realised fact. It does not, on the other hand, present many facilities for making a fortune; nor do the colonists desire to have amongst them millionaires or billionaires; but what they want is steady progress without poverty; and let us hope that they may have it. It is true that that crying evil of modern civilisation, centralisation, has already begun to show its evil effects in 'the four colonial cities.' Men will cling to the town, preferring the enjoyments of the bar and cheap theatre to solid independence up the country. Politicians and municipal authorities encourage the evil by finding employment for these 'loafers.' We remember seeing a squad of these so-called unemployed in Dunedin. They were getting four shillings and sixpence a day, and it was currently reported that they were going out on strike for an increase. Yet the country is simply crying out for an able-bodied class, either as occupiers of their own land or as hired labourers; for it is the men who can wield the pick and shovel that have the ball at their feet.

PURVEYANCE.

EVERY year, on the anniversary of the birthday of the Prince of Wales, a gathering of some two hundred of the 'Royal Warrant-holders' takes place at one of the principal London restaurants, in order to loyally celebrate the happy event. Such a gathering together of those who enjoy the privilege of holding the 'Royal Warrant of Purveyance' affords a striking contrast to the condition of things which existed, in regard to the purveyance of the royal household, prior to the period of Charles II., in whose reign the old and pernicious system of purveyance received its death-blow.

Purveyance, or 'pourveyance' as it was termed in the middle ages, signifies the providing of necessaries for the sovereign and his or her family

by buying the commodities at an appraised value in preference to all others, and even without the owners' consent. To trace its origin is no easy task. Suffice it to say that there may be found many biblical references to a system of 'tribute,' an operation which would seem to have a somewhat close connection with purveyance; an organisation introduced, no doubt, by the Romans, and so handed down to their successors. The subject affords but little interest until the reign of Edward III. is reached. An amusing incident, however, occurring as far back as the reign of King Edgar, as told by Chauncey in his *History of Herts*, is retold here in order to show the cunning practices resorted to by royalty in those early days.

It would seem that, except by special charter, the inmates of the monasteries, in common with the rest of the king's subjects, were not exempt from purveyance; thus, they were frequently liable to the visits of royalty and its retinue, such visits being considered as part of the system of purveyance. The Abbey of St Albans had, we are told, a large lake adjoining it, to which the king, with his no small troop of retainers, made frequent visits for the purpose of fishing. After satisfying themselves with sport, the king and his followers invariably made themselves the guests of the Abbey. These frequent visits becoming inconvenient to the inmates of the Abbey, the wily Abbot, in order to rid himself of such troublesome guests, adopted the plan of draining the pool, under the pretence of extending the Abbey, which from that time forth had no attraction for royalty.

To return to the period of Edward III. We find the office of purveyor to have been one exercised with much oppression, so much so, indeed, as to necessitate continual applications to the king for redress, and, as a result, the passing of numerous Acts of Parliament to restrain the abuses complained of. We are told that, as a response to some of the appeals, he changed the title of the much-abused office to that of Acheteur, or buyer. The new title does not appear to have lasted very long, nor does it in itself seem to have been a remedy for the evils that existed; but the change was followed by a certain amount of reform—that is to say, regulations were framed by which one of the king's household was appointed to inquire into the conduct of the acheteurs; and if they took more than they delivered into the royal larder, and did not pay for what they received—errors not infrequently committed—from the people, they were to forfeit their lives.

Burke, in a speech in Parliament on the proposed reformation of the king's household, seems to have had a pretty clear conception of the character of these officers, whom he described as 'sallying forth under the Gothic portenllis to purchase provisions with power and prerogative, instead of money, inspiring terror, and finding a flying and hiding country.' These officers not only had power to raise food for the royal household, but the carriages and horses of the subject, however inconvenient it might be to the owner, were likewise liable to be impressed into the king's service at a 'fixed price.' Even the ships of merchants arriving in port laden with wine were not exempt from visits of the king's pur-

veyor. We are told also that this officer had the right of choosing two hogsheds of wine—no doubt he chose the best—for a payment of twenty shillings for each, with the option of taking more if he chose at an appraised value. A fishmonger pursuing his trade in this reign was precluded, by royal command, from going out of the City of London to purchase fish until the king's purveyor should have first made his purveyance for the king.

Such was the condition of things in the years of Edward III.'s reign, in which many Acts were passed with the view of relieving the oppressed people from the rapacity and extortion of the 'purveyors' or 'acheteurs,' but to little purpose. Until Elizabeth's reign little or no change took place in the condition of things under which the people suffered. Then it was that the royal authority was exerted by the hanging of one of her purveyors for having forcibly taken provisions without paying for them. Notwithstanding this salutary example, the purveyors still gave trouble to her subjects by withholding the money due to them for goods supplied; causing them at last to petition the Queen that she would accept the value of goods in money, that is to say by means of a composition. This, at first, she would not assent to; but after some hesitation an agreement was arrived at as to what proportion of goods each county should supply. Hence compositions in each county were made by the Justices of the Peace for serving a certain quantity of provisions at rates fixed by them in consultation with the officers of the royal household; the difference between the price fixed by the justices and the market value being raised by an assessment on the whole county and paid to the owners of the goods. As an indication of how far below the market value were the royal or justices' prices, the following table is given of an assessment made in Middlesex:

		Royal Prices.	Market Prices.
		s. d.	£ s. d.
Wheat.....	200 qrs. at 6 8		2 0 0
Veals.....	40 qrs. at 12 0		1 2 0
".....	100 qrs. at 6 8		1 2 0
Greene Geese.....	10 doz. at 3 0		1 8 0
Capons.....	10 doz. at 4 0		0 16 0
Hens.....	20 doz. at 1 6		0 12 0
Pullets.....	20 doz. at 1 6		0 10 0
Chickens.....	40 doz. at 2 0		0 6 0
Hay.....	200 loads at 4 0		1 10 0
Oats.....	211 qrs. at 4 0		0 12 0
Litter.....	180 loads at 4 0		0 10 0
Wood.....	200 loads at 3 0		7 0 0

—the difference on the whole being in favour of royalty to the extent of nearly one thousand pounds. By this method of taxation, though falling somewhat heavily on the county, those serving the royal household received the market price for their goods, less the proportionate difference between the royal and market prices, which they, in common with their neighbours, were called upon to pay by way of assessment; besides which they were relieved of the personal presence of the obnoxious royal purveyors, the duty of raising the provisions required by the royal household, from that time forth, devolving upon the High Constables.

In the following reign, however, as most readers of history are aware, the unhappy system of purveyance, with its attendant evils, was com-

pletely abolished; in consideration of which, Parliament settled upon the 'Merrie Monarch' the hereditary excise of fifteenpence per barrel on beers sold in the kingdom, and a proportionate sum on all other liquors.

No doubt, in the times when the court moved very frequently from one place to another, as it was accustomed to do, when markets were few and provisions not so abundant as now, an honest system of purveyance was a necessity; but in these days of luxury and convenience, so far from the abolition of the old mode of purveyance being a matter for regret, the contrary is the case: the people, instead of, as in days gone by, fleeing at the approach of royalty, now welcome it, and none more so perhaps than the fortunate 'Royal Warrant-holders.'

AN INCIDENT IN THE WILD WEST.

THE story which we are going to relate has nothing to do with cowboys on the spree, or any of those shooting affairs in drinking saloons of which we hear from time to time, and which are, unfortunately, still common enough in the Wild West, but has to do entirely with the widely prevailing custom of punishing criminals by lynch-law, instead of waiting for the proper authorities to carry out their duties. Possibly many people in this country suppose that lynch-law—that is, the taking of the law into their own hands by the dwellers in Western settlements—is only resorted to when there are no constituted authorities at hand to carry it out. We shall show that it is frequently put in action even after the State itself has already begun to move in the matter; and that, consequently, instead of being practised because there is no other law in existence, lynch-law and the State sometimes come into conflict in such a way as to tend to additional bloodshed.

The scene is the little town of Graham, situated about a hundred miles from the State capital, and not far from the Rio Brazos, which flows through the centre of the enormous State of Texas, the largest of all the United States. Although Graham is but a small place of some six hundred inhabitants, it is the chief town of Young County, and is dignified, according to Western usage, by the name of a city. In the centre of the town stands the jail, a plain square building, whose barred windows look right into the public open space around, so that the prisoners within can, if they choose, hold conversation with their friends outside. We need not speak of the interior of the jail, for the events which we are going to describe happened chiefly without its walls.

In the month of December 1888, four brothers named Marlow were imprisoned in this jail on a charge of horse-stealing. There were five brothers altogether, and their home, a rough shanty, was situated four or five miles outside Graham. They bore an indifferent character, and were commonly known as 'Those Marlow Boys.' The sheriff of the county at the time was one Marion Wallis, a much respected citizen and official. A sheriff in an American county may be described as a combination of jail-keeper and policeman, and occupies something of the position of a superintendent who has charge of a lock-up

and police division in one of our English counties. A few days before Christmas, the Marlows were released from prison on bail. They had hardly left the jail before Sheriff Wallis received a warrant to arrest them on a charge of murder. Wallis was a kind-hearted man, and he determined not to execute the warrant at once. He would let the men have, he said, one day to see their old mother and their wives. The next day he went, accompanied by his under-sheriff, one Collier, to the home of the Marlow Boys. It was about mid-day, and they were seated round the dinner-table.

'How d' ye, Wallis?' said one of them. 'Come and have a snack.'

'Don't mind if I do; believe I will,' replied the sheriff. He turned to the door and beckoned to Collier. No sooner had he turned, than one of the men seized a Winchester rifle which was ready to his hand and shot him through the back. Collier, seeing his chief fall, made for his six-shooter, which was in the saddle pouch on his horse outside the door.

'Hic, Collier!' cried the Marlows, 'put down that six-shooter, and you may come and attend to Wallis; but if you don't drop it at once, you're a dead man.'

Collier had already had a narrow escape, and accordingly he concluded to drop his weapon, and the murderers fled from the hut.

He procured assistance, and carried Wallis back to Graham. The poor man lingered for a few days; on Christmas Day he died. During the whole of the short time that he continued to live, he was wandering and delirious, now calling out, 'Do not hurt the Marlow Boys,' and now imagining that he was tracking his own murderers through the scrub. The men had not gone far from their home, with the exception of one who had jumped on to a horse. Citizens had gone out on the night of the day on which Wallis had been shot, and had brought four of the brothers to Graham, and lodged them in the jail again, amidst the yells of the inhabitants, with whom poor Wallis was very popular. It must be remembered he was not yet dead, or something might have been done that night. When, however, it was known that Wallis was dying, the populace was aroused. On Christmas Eve an attack was made on the jail. It was but a half-hearted one, for, though the gate was burst open, the Marlows armed themselves with iron bars, and threatened to strike down the first man who entered. The under-sheriff managed to secure the jail again, and no further attack was made on the building.

Wallis was buried on New-year's Day, the whole population of the town attending his funeral. By the middle of January it was known that the Marlows were to be moved to the town of Dallas, either for more safe custody, or that they might stand their trial there. Dallas is about fifty miles from Graham, and some of the Grahamites had determined that, if they could prevent it, the prisoners should not reach Dallas alive. At dead of night an official sent from Dallas proceeded to remove the prisoners. He had the four brothers chained two and two by their feet, and they were placed in a sort of van, called a 'hack,' together with two other prisoners. No armed men rode with them, for fear, it was said, that their weapons might be wrested from

them by the desperate Marlows; but some men who had been engaged for the purpose, rode, armed with Winchesters and revolvers, in another hack behind. The road led through a ravine just outside the town. This ravine had been lined on each side by a gang of masked citizens, who fired down indiscriminately on the party below. The wagons stopped. The Marlows jumped out, ironed as they were, and wrenched some of the weapons from their assailants. The night was pitch-dark. The shooting was wild and furious in the midst of the confused crowd. It was never known exactly by whom the many fatal shots were fired in that terrible darkness. Two of the Marlows fell dead, and so did three of the citizens. Many others, both of the prisoners and of the attacking party, were wounded. The guard in the second hack were but of little use. One young man jumped off and ran back to the town in a fright; the others were useless either to keep off the mob or to secure the prisoners. The two surviving Marlow boys jumped on to one of the hacks in company with one of the other prisoners, and drove home through the streets of Graham shouting and singing. The inhabitants who had not taken part in the plot, aroused from their sleep, and warned of what had happened by the young man who had been the first to escape, made their way to the scene of action, and brought in the dead and wounded from the blood-stained road. The bodies were those of the two Marlows and of three citizens. When the masks were removed from the faces of the dead, their fellow-citizens were horrified to see what respectable and prominent inhabitants of the town had taken part in this lawless enterprise.

The Marlow survivors arrived at their shanty blood-stained and wounded. There they remained for some days. The townsfolk seemed to be completely cowed, for they allowed themselves to be kept off by the five women, wives and widows, who kept guard with Winchesters and revolvers over the hut where the wounded men lay. A doctor was admitted to attend to them; no other man dared to pass.

The United States Government now interposed in the matter; and after a few days, the Marlows gave themselves up to the officials, were taken off to Dallas, and then, strange to say, liberated on bail. One brother was still at large, the man who had ridden off on the day when Wallis was shot. He went by the name of Boom Marlow, and a reward was offered for him dead or alive. Some young men went out from Graham, tracked him, shot him, and brought in his body. The young men who did this found themselves, to their astonishment, arrested for murder, but were also, according to the prevailing custom, let out on bail. In the meanwhile, proceedings had been taken against the leaders of the night attack; but they were let out on bail as well. Seven lives had already been lost over this affair.

After a lapse of more than a twelvemonth the two Marlows were at last brought to trial, and, to the surprise of all who knew anything of the case, were acquitted of the murder of Marion Wallis. Of course the original charge of murder on which Wallis went to arrest them has been entirely lost sight of. As to the citizens who made the midnight attack, they are still out on

bail, and whether or not anything further will be done in their case, no one can say.

The inquiry naturally arises: Why do these exhibitions of mob violence take place? Why does not the law proceed in its ordinary course? We have been describing no isolated case. Such a state of things is only too common out West. Only about ten years ago a very similar case took place in Graham itself. Three men were arrested for a most cold-blooded murder. They had killed a man on his farm in the absence of his wife, and when the woman returned, told her that her husband had sold the farm to them, and had moved elsewhere. Well, these men were shot down as they were being conducted through the streets of Graham. They fell on the footway, perfectly riddled with bullets, one Sunday morning as the people were walking to their places of worship. The reason must be the strange uncertainty of the law, the uncalculated delay, and the too ready granting of bail. So many red-handed murderers have got off in one way or another, that the criminal law has come to be regarded in certain districts with distrust, and the consequence is that Judge Lynch has taken its place. There is a sense of honour, however, amongst these assistants of Judge Lynch. They do not wish to be lawless, they say; they only want to carry out just retribution, which they fear may not come in any other way. For instance, in the second case which we have described a gunmaker's store was broken into, and the weapons and ammunition were seized for the attack on the murderers of the farmer. After all was over, every weapon was returned. The incident reminds one of the guinea left in the rope-maker's booth in Edinburgh in exchange for the rope taken thence for the hanging of Porteous, as described in the 'Heart of Mid-Lothian.' The remedy for the evil is a more efficient police system, and what is far more important, the immediate trial of prisoners charged with murder, to be followed by their immediate, or at least not too tardy execution if found guilty. It is only in this way that any confidence or belief in the law can be implanted in the minds of the dwellers in the Wild West.

THE HISTORY OF NUGGET-FINDING.

THE history of the great Californian and other Nuggets of the precious metal is in many respects interesting and romantic. Thus, the discovery of one of the finest Californian nuggets was made under very singular circumstances. It is known as the Oliver Martin Nugget, and was found near Camp Corona, in Tuolumne County, and weighed 151 pounds 6 ounces. Martin and a companion named Flower were camped in a cañon, when a terrible rain-storm came on in the night, and the water in the stream suddenly rose. The miners attempted to climb the hill, but the flood overtook them, and both were carried down the stream. Flower was drowned; but Martin, though severely injured, escaped.

While trying to bury his companion's body by the roots of an upturned tree, Martin discovered the rich nugget that bears his name. He was too weak to move it. He attempted to reach some neighbouring miners, but fainted from

exhaustion, and was found on the trail by them. When able to walk, some weeks later, Martin took them to the spot, and the nugget was removed. The gold was mixed with quartz, but the nugget was valued at over twenty thousand dollars.

But the largest nugget ever found in California was discovered in November 1854, at Carson Hill, Calaveras County. It weighed 180 pounds. Another, weighing 149 pounds, was soon afterwards found at the same place.

In August 1869, W. A. Farish, A. Wood, J. Winstead, F. Clevers, and Harry Warner, were partners in the Monumental claim, near the Sierra Buttes, in Sierra County. During the last week in that month they discovered a huge nugget, which weighed 1593 ounces troy. It was sold to R. B. Woodward, of San Francisco, who paid 21,637 dollars for it for exhibition purposes. It was afterwards melted, and realised 17,655 dollars. Sierra is justly famed for the nuggets it has produced. It was in this county, at a spot known as French Ravine, that a nugget valued at twenty-three thousand dollars was found in 1850.

The biggest nugget of gold ever found in Shasta County was discovered in 1870. One day three Frenchmen, two of whom were named Oliver Longchamp and Fred Rochon, drove into the old town of Shasta in search of a spot to mine. They happened to have some business with A. Coleman, a dealer in hardware. The three asked him where was a good place to mine. He carelessly pointed in a northerly direction and said: 'Go over to Spring Creek.' They took his advice, located a claim on the creek about eight miles north of Redding, and in a few days one of the little party picked up a nugget worth sixteen thousand dollars.

Plumas County, though one of the richest mining districts in California, has yielded but few valuable nuggets. The largest was found by a Chinaman in 1861, and was sold for 9600 dollars. A miner named Archie Little found one in the same district that brought him 4906 dollars.

In Placer County, in 1859, Edward Gilbert, in a drift-mine near Butcher Ranch, about a dozen miles from Auburn, found a nugget of gold and quartz that weighed twenty pounds, which he disposed of for five thousand dollars. A little later on the same man discovered another valuable nugget. The gold was embedded in a mass of crystallised quartz with clear-cut corners, the sides of whose cubes shone with great brilliancy. He sold it for 6206 dollars.

In El Dorado County, at Spanish Dry Diggings, a nugget weighing 105 ounces was found in 1853, and sold for 1800 dollars. Another was found near Kelsey in the same county, and sold for 4700 dollars. In 1863 a mass of gold weighing 360 ounces was discovered at Columbus, in the same county, and was valued at 5236 dollars; and not far from the same spot, a poor Frenchman found a nugget valued at five thousand dollars. The rich mass of gold rendered the miner insane, and on the following day he had to be sent to the Stockton Asylum. The money was sent to his family in France. Near Knapp Ranch, in the same county, John Strain discovered a nugget that weighed 50 pounds. There was a large percentage of quartz in it, but the gold fetched 9500 dollars.

Near Magalia, in Butte County, on August 14, 1859, Ira A. Willard found a nugget weighing 54 pounds; and on the strength of his find, he and his companions held a grand drinking bout.

The largest nugget ever found in North Carolina weighed 80 pounds. The largest ever found in Siberia weighed 96 pounds 4 ounces; while the heaviest nugget of gold ever found in the world was found in Australia in 1852. It weighed 223 pounds, and was known as the Water Moon Nugget.

A curious fact in connection with gold-finding has just come to light in the United States. George Nay, an old Colorado miner, asserts that he has at last found the Mojave Mine, one of the famous lost gold mines of the desert, whose existence has been unknown for nearly thirty years. This mine was notable among the Mojave and Hualapai Indians for a long time before the arrival of white men. The Mojaves used to bring the gold out and trade with it along the Colorado River. The location could not be found, however, as Arataba, the old chief of the Mojaves, kept it a secret. Many white men have hunted for the mine since the death of Arataba, which took place about twenty years ago; and Nay now claims that he has discovered the location of the mine. He says it is twenty miles over the Colorado River, in Arizona, and on the edge of the Sugar Loaf Mountain. He has discovered distinct traces of the old Mojave workings, and has gone to San Francisco for the purpose of forming a company. If he is not mistaken, the United States may once more become the scene of nugget-finding.

DREAM-LAND.

THOUGH the years be fled, and the pain is dead,
And the grief is over long,
Yet on Dream-land track doth the soul go back,
And lo! the sound of a song,
That rings from a glade where the trees are green,
Where the wind of sorrow never hath been!

And out of the night come back to sight
The forms and faces of yore,
The old love wakes, and the old joy takes
Colour and light once more;
There sounds a voice we can never hear,
A step that has left us for many a year.

The sunbeams creep over eyes that sleep,
And we wake with a start to know
That in fair dream-land we have clasped a hand
Which held ours—long ago!
And we thrill to a touch that is lingering yet
To a passion of love, and of vain regret.

And for many a day we wend our way
The unseen world around us,
For the soul has snapped the chain that wrapped
The earthly links that bound us,
And the workaday world around us seems
Less real by far than the land of dreams.

MARY GORGES.

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POMONA.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LADDIE,' 'TIP CAT,' 'LIL,' &c.

THE PROLOGUE.

THERE was an apple-tree in full bloom the day the child was born, and that was why she was called Pomona. Her father, Owen Ludlow, had retired from the agitation prevailing in the bright, little house that still bore the marks of the newly married plainly about it, for his wedding day was barely a year ago, and had betaken himself to the small room that was called his studio, and had nearly spoilt a pretty sketch on his easel by an unaccountable unsteadiness in his hand, and so had given up the attempt, and had stood looking out at the window, imagining that he was taking artistic stock of the pink and white glories of the tree outside, and of the sunshine dappling the green moss on its trunk, and of the cluster of white narcissus underneath. Really, he was quite unconscious of what he was looking at, all his senses being concentrated in the next room with his young wife; but, all the same, that day was inseparably connected in his mind with apple blossom, and apple blossom with that day, as also the long soft note of a nightingale, which was interrupted by a knock at the door and the entrance of the doctor to announce that he was the father of a little girl. Whenever he heard that long note in years to come, he listened also involuntarily for the knock at the door and the old doctor's voice.

A few days later the blossom was falling softly on the mossy path and the box-edging, when Owen Ludlow went out to pick some of those white narcissus to put in his dead wife's hand. It was very sad. There was the greatest sympathy bestowed on the young widower, whose honeymoon was hardly over, whose wedding presents were still almost intact, time and housemaids'

dusters not having yet wrought their usual work of devastation. In the wardrobe, that still opened stiffly from newness, hung the pretty trousseau dresses, some of them hardly worn; and there were yet unexplored corners in the hearts both of husband and wife, feelings unknown to each other, sympathies untasted, antipathies—who can tell?—untouched on; hundreds of circumstances in which one had not seen the other, and could have no idea how he or she would act. For example, she had never seen him in the exasperating circumstances of spring-cleaning, the newly-married house being all spick and span when they came into it last May, and the general upheaval and convulsion, that comes with the spring-time into all well-regulated households, having been postponed till after Pomona's arrival. It is not easy to find an equivalent situation of trial in which Owen Ludlow might have seen his wife; but undoubtedly during the first few years of married life there must be continual surprises, and new lights thrown on character and conduct, which may be pleasing or the reverse.

Well, sad as it was to lose all the sweet possibilities, it must be taken into account that they escaped all the bitter as well; and it was something to part without a single breath to ruffle the course of the stream of true love, over which the honeymoon shone so brightly to the very end. A sorrow that is quite free from remorse is almost a happiness when the first anguish is over.

But it was not to be expected that Owen Ludlow should feel this that first evening, when the room above was empty with that emptiness only a funeral can leave, and the mournful, little

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party of guests had departed, and he sat in the dining-room, that was pervaded with the sickly smell of black gloves and funeral flowers, and tried to re-arrange his life's programme. His wife's work-basket was still on the little table in the window, with the needle stuck into the baby's shirt she had been hemming not a fortnight ago. The basket itself had been a wedding present from some school-girl friend, and each little working implement had some pleasant association to the young wife. Owen felt, even in his own great grief, a little extra, pitiful feeling for all these simple associations snapped so abruptly. Who would remember now if Bessie or Rose had given the small thimble, or how little Dolly made that pincushion with her own hands? He put them all almost tenderly away, as if they, too, could feel their bereavement; and he was quite glad of the trifling occupation to distract him for a moment from the distasteful task of making up his mind as regarded the future.

There was the baby to be thought of—Pomona. He had quite made up his mind that she should be called Pomona, though the old nurse had declared it to be an outlandish name, and 'Why shouldn't she be called after her poor dear Ma?' Not that, of all other names; it would have been sacrilege to him to call any one Katharine Ludlow—above all, such an odd, little, red object as the nurse had exhibited with pride; just as it was an insult to pretend to find a likeness between mother and child, as the servants always did in very audible tones when they thought he was within hearing. And besides, the name, Pomona, would always be suggestive to him not only of the child's birthday—when, as I have said, the apple blossom was in full beauty outside the window—but of all that short year of happiness. The little home was called 'the Orchards,' not on the *lucus a non lucendi* principle, as houses in the suburbs are named 'the Cedars,' 'the Chestnuts,' and so on, regardless of the vegetable growth in the little front gardens. But in this case the house was literally surrounded by orchards, and could only be reached by a path under the gnarled branches of apple-trees; and tall men had to look out for their hats as they entered, and blossom fell like snow on the coffin as it was carried out.

It was the blossom season when they first came home after their short wedding tour. It seemed almost unbelievably sweet and idyllic that first evening, as they sat at tea with a great bowl of cowslips in the middle of the table, and Katharine taking her place for the first time as mistress of the house, with a pretty air of importance. The sweet May twilight crept upon them as they sat lingering over their meal, and suddenly, from a bush close outside, a nightingale's liquid note trembled on the fragrant air. Only a year ago!

But it was not only in the spring-time, but all the year round, that the apple-trees seemed connected with their happiness. To one of the twisted boughs he had fastened the hammock where so many of the hot sultry summer afternoons were spent, with the bees drowsily humming round, and only an occasional twitter breaking the summer silence of the birds. Under another tree, the little afternoon tea-table used to be set; and day after day they noticed how the little green apples grew and rounded and yellowed and blushed, till at last the whole

orchard was full of red and russet and golden fruit, a garden of the Hesperides, at which the school-boys cast envious eyes in passing, eyes which Katharine could never resist, generally responding to them with an apronful of apples, which naturally doubled the number of envious eyes on the following day.

And when they were all gathered and stored away, the orchard was yet lovely with the yellow and brown foliage thinning on the trees, and the fragrance of the dead leaves on the grass, and the soft emerald mosses and gray lichens showing on the crooked trunks as they had not done in summer-time. And at Christmas there was mistletoe on the tree in the corner; and he picked some from the frosty boughs, which made a clear sharp-cut trellis-work against the cold, pale blue sky; and he kissed his wife's sweet face, pretending that there was need of mistletoe privileges to excuse such a very ordinary occurrence. And on New-year's Day came the snow, turning the orchard into fairyland, with every twig and tiny branch outlined in purest white. And now, again, came blossoming-time, only the flowers fell on a coffin carried out. And that brought him back to the empty present, and the necessity for arranging for the future.

'Let me have the poor baby,' his mother had sent word, being too much of an invalid to come to her bereaved son; and her husband had scrupulously delivered the message, though even the deep melancholy of the occasion could not prevent the exchange of a half-comical glance between father and son as he did so.

Mrs Ludlow was a person of whom poor people would say—unconsciously conveying, as they often do, a very real fact—that she enjoyed bad health. Her health was her one interest. I do not know what she would have done if some day she had realised the fact that she was quite as well and strong as the majority of other people, that there was no reason why she should not get up at a reasonable time and dress in a reasonable way, discarding dressing-gowns or tea-gowns—which, by the way, to the uninitiated seem only a glorified form of dressing-gown—and eat a reasonable meal, and go out into the air and sunshine, and be of some use to somebody or something in the world.

But she never did realise the fact; and perhaps, after all, it was not a fact, and she really was too frail and sensitive and delicate to take a share, even the smallest, in God's great, active, workaday world. But the idea of her with a baby was comic even to a broken heart, and to her indulgent husband, who believed implicitly in every ache and pain and fainting and palpitation. A baby that cried! Even at this early age it was capable of a cat-like sound of considerable volume and great persistence, and no doubt would develop into much louder performances as it grew older. A baby who might have fits, or fearful difficulties over teething, or whooping-cough, or other distressing infantile complaints, encroaching on Mrs Ludlow's prerogative of being the one invalid in the house. A child, who, after babyhood was passed, would be romping and fidgeting all over the place, tumbling about, injuring itself or other things of more importance; for, after her own health, old china was Mrs Ludlow's special hobby. All this flashed

through Mr Ludlow's mind as he delivered the message with a little twinkle in one corner of his eyes, that were so full of sincere sympathy with his son's misfortune.

'Thank my mother very much,' Owen had answered; 'but I think I can make another arrangement about the child.'

And his father, with eager acquiescence, said: 'Yes, yes! to be sure; yes, yes! of course,' in a nervous way he had; and fortunately did not inquire what the other arrangement might be, seeing that Owen himself had no idea.

Now, as he sat by himself—how much by himself!—that evening cogitating, the baby seemed to him almost the worst part of his misfortunes. The clergyman of the parish, as he bade him good-bye, had pressed his hand and murmured something about his not being left without a little spark of comfort—that the baby would be an interest and happiness to him; and Owen tried to respond fittingly, and not shock the reverend gentleman by expressing a wish that it were allowable to drown babies like superfluous kittens, and by declaring that if he were to look for comfort and happiness in the future to that little red object encased in flannel, the prospect was a poor one indeed.

He had an overwhelming longing to get away, out of all the associations that had been so sweet, and were now so bitter—to go where he and Katharine had never been together—to live a life that she could not have shared—to bury himself entirely in some work that would occupy heart and mind and eyes and brain, leaving no room for the loving and thinking and watching and listening that seemed all his being, and to have been turned by Death's ruthless hand into keen and constant suffering. The gaping desolate void must be filled somehow, if he was to live—no matter what rubbish was shot into it, it must be filled before he could begin building up the edifice of his life again.

But the baby seemed to prevent this entire cutting himself adrift; he could not—thank Heaven!—take it with him, racking about in bachelor's quarters at home or abroad; and he remembered fearful stories of children placed out to nurse being neglected and ill-treated; and, for Katharine's sake, he would not wish this to be the case, any more than he would have allowed a small kitten that her gentle hand had fondled, or a robin that she had rescued from the snow and coaxed back into impertinent bright-eyed life, to suffer, now she was gone.

He could not detect in his feelings any of that parental affection which he understood sprang into existence on the birth of a baby; he sought in vain for any of the foolish admiration that makes young parents so ridiculous; he did not consider it at all a wonderful or even interesting production of nature—certainly the most prejudiced beholder could not call it even decently good-looking. He went up more than once to look at it as it lay asleep, and he tried to feel a kindling of warmth at his heart, the very faintest throb of fatherly love or pride; and the nurse sobbed aloud at the touching sight, and told the other servants, 'Twere enough to break one's heart to see him so wrope up in the child as couldn't tear hisself away nohow!

But Owen Ludlow turned away each time with

a deeper conviction that it was no use trying to fill the great void Katharine had left with that dreadful little object up-stairs. But he had not got any more forward in arranging his future plans; and it was almost a relief to be distracted from the consideration of them by the sound of wheels in the road outside, wheels that stopped at the white gate, by which a path under the apple-trees led up to the house. It was nine o'clock by this time, and on that unfrequented road the sound of wheels at that hour was unusual; but perhaps it might be the carrier from the county town.

If Owen Ludlow had not been only too willing to be distracted, he might not have noticed the interruption; but as it was, he hailed it with pleasure, were it only that just for a minute it silenced the nightingale outside, which seemed to be using all its arts to tear and harrow the husband's heart with exquisitely sad sweet memories. He got up and looked out into the orchard, where the stars gave a dim light; and he saw a tall woman coming up the path, and a shine of carriage-lamps at the gate behind her. It was a lady; even in the semi-darkness he could see by the way she walked that she was not one of the villagers; but there was nothing familiar to him in the figure, though he quickly ran over in his mind all the friends of himself or his wife who this could possibly be.

'A lady, sir, to see you,' the servant announced a minute later. 'I told her as you was very much occupied, and I didn't think as you'd care to see no one; but she said she would not detain you many minutes.'

'Did she give any name?'

'No: she said'—

But the dimensions of the Orchards were so small that, as the servant stood holding the dining-room door in her hand, any one at the front door must be standing almost immediately behind her; and the visitor at this point undertook her own introduction, and, passing the girl, entered the room, saying, 'I must apologise for intruding at such a time; but I have something of importance to speak about, and this may be my only opportunity.'

She was tall, above the general height of women; and the effect of height was increased by the long straight cloak she wore, and the way she carried her head, which made Owen Ludlow feel as if he were shorter, though in fact he was not.

He bowed rather awkwardly, and drew forward a chair for her; while the servant with some reluctance closed the door, being naturally anxious to find out who this strange and late visitor might be.

'And quite the lady, as one could see with half an eye; and never been here before, and come in a carriage and pair. Didn't we ought to ask the coachman if he wouldn't take something, Mary Jane, as may have come a long way?'

But on reconnoitring, they found there was some one else—another lady in the carriage, which damped their hospitable intentions; and they also discovered that the carriage that looked so imposing in the dark with the lamps was only a fly from the station hotel at Courtilington, five miles off—as it ain't no good wasting good beer on a flyman.'

But meanwhile in the little dining-room a

strange proposal was being made to Owen Ludlow. The lady had put up her veil, and showed a face that was almost lovely, only it had such an unhappy, dissatisfied look in the gray eyes and drooping lines of the mouth.

'You will hardly know my name,' she said; 'but I was at school with your wife, and she would have remembered Marjory Grant very well.'

'I remember her speaking of you,' he said.

'I am Lady Lester now, and I have been married eight years.'

Memories were coming back to Owen Ludlow's mind of his wife talking of her pretty school-fellow, who had married directly she left school—he fancied she had said a man a good deal older than herself. He remembered stories of school-girl pieces of fun in which this Marjory Grant had been ringleader, full of wild spirits, and up to any amount of innocent mischief and harmless adventure. But perhaps this was some other girl, for this sad-faced Lady Lester did not seem capable of madcap frolic.

'I have never seen Katharine since we parted at school; but when I heard of—your loss, it brought it all back to me so vividly, that as I was staying one night at Courtlington, I thought I must come, even at the risk of intruding on your sorrow, to tell you how much I loved her, and how sorry I am.'

'Thank you,' was all he could answer as he pressed the hand she stretched out to him, for the tears in her eyes made his grow dim and choked his voice.

'But this is not all,' she went on. 'They told me the baby was living. I have none; and I want you to let me have hers.—Wait a bit!' She stopped his reply. 'Is the baby (a girl, isn't it?)—is she very, very dear to you? Is she a great comfort to you? Because, if she is, I won't say a word more. But if not—for something in Owen Ludlow's face reassured her—'if not, I want you to let me have her. I don't mean merely to bring up for you, but altogether—entirely—to be my own little girl.'

'But'—he began hesitatingly.

'Yes; I know,' she went on eagerly. 'No doubt it is impossible; but just let me put my case fairly before you decide against me. You know, or perhaps you don't know, that my husband, Sir Hugh Lester, was a widower when I married him, with two boys; so your little girl won't be a great heiress if you let me have her. She will only have the little I have of my own. My husband is all that is good and kind; I have not a word to say against him.' (But perhaps a little sigh that filled up a pause here might have told a little tale, if Owen Ludlow could have interpreted it)—'and the boys are dear fellows, and as fond of me as if I were their own mother, but—I have none of my own.—Well'—she went on, after another pause, eloquent with the unsatisfied longing and yearning that perhaps only a childless woman could sympathise with, which certainly Owen Ludlow could not appreciate, who would have given all the babies in the world for the one life he had lost—'well, my husband is quite willing I should adopt a child; he is most indulgent to all my whims and fancies; he took endless trouble to get a dog he thought would please me; my horses are the envy of all my

friends; he spends fabulous sums on orchids for me; he is quite glad when I express the faintest wish for any costly luxury that he can get for me. He only stipulates about the child that it shall not be picked up anywhere out of the mire, from among waifs and strays, of unknown parentage, who may inherit bad tendencies of mind and body, disease or vice.—He is very sensible and very good, you see,' she went on. 'It is all open and above-board as far as he is concerned; and it can do no one any wrong, as, of course, the boys will inherit all the property, and my (?) little girl will only have what I can give her. It is no case of palming off an heir or altering the inheritance in any way, as one reads of in books, but just to give me a dear little girl to love, and make me happy, with my husband's full consent and approval.'

She was silent now; but her great soft eyes looked so pleadingly at Owen Ludlow that he still seemed to hear her earnest voice entreating for what was of so little value to him, for what he had only that evening been realising was an embarrassment and a burden. And then before his mind came the memory of a letter from an old artist friend of his, received a week or two back, and not thought of during all this time of agitation and anguish, telling of his speedy departure for the Rocky Mountains, where he was going in search of health and scenery. 'Ah, Ludlow,' he finished up, 'if only you were not married and done for, and could strike your tents and come along with me, what high times we might have!'

Lady Lester's eager eyes detected the signs of wavering in his face. 'You shall never regret that you have trusted her to me,' she said. 'I think Katharine would have liked me to have her baby—above all, if she could have known how sorely I want something all my own to love and care for.'

'You will let me consider the matter,' he said; 'it is too important a thing to decide in a hurry.'

'Of course,' she answered—'of course. But—if it is to be so, is there any object in delay? I mean, if you do not mind—my husband does not—that she shall bear my name, and be supposed to be my own child; and it would be best, I thought, if you would let me take her away with me to-night. My maid is waiting outside in the carriage; she is used to children, and can quite take care of her till we get home, and can find a regular nurse for her. And besides, I am only staying one night at Courtlington, and am on my way to Weymouth, where my husband will join me later on. He is yachting with the boys. He will be at Southampton to-day, and I will telegraph to him at once what I have done.'

But it would take too long to recapitulate all the arguments Lady Lester put forth in support of her plea, while, all the time, another advocate within himself was urging the relief it would be to know that Katharine's baby was happily and safely provided for, and himself free to go clear away from all associations.

Honestly, when he analysed his feeling for the baby, it was scarcely as deep and warm as what he felt for many of his wife's possessions—the dresses she had worn, the rings he had kissed on

her dainty fingers, the lace that had lain soft and warm round her neck; and he would not pretend to more feeling than he could truthfully detect in the heart that seemed buried in his wife's new-made grave. So, at the end of half an hour, the old nurse, nodding in her chair by the side of the bassinette, was startled by the apparition of a tall lady standing there, looking down at the baby with a look of such delight and pride as the old monthly nurse in all her wide experience had never seen but on the face of newly-made mothers.

'My own little girl!' she said as she drew back the flannel from its head with fingers that seemed trembling to snatch the baby up and satisfy with kisses the hungry look on the lips and in the loving eyes.

'A sweet, pretty lady too!' the nurse imparted to the other servants when she was gone, though she did not think it necessary to impart any share of the sovereign that was slipped into her hand at parting; 'and, as far as I could make out, some kin to the poor dear that's gone, and favoured her a bit in features, if I weren't mistook. Anyhow, she were terrible set on having the baby, and would have took it off there and then; only the master, he wouldn't agree to that nohow, and 'twere plain to see he didn't half like to let it go, being that wrop up in it, natural like. So it was settled as it were to be all ready by the day after to-morrow, when her ladyship's own maid would come over and fetch the precious lamb. Yes, 'twere her ladyship, sure enough! though I can't mind the name as the master called her, and never heard tell as the missis come of such high folk, though she were a born lady, poor dear, as ever were. She asked all sorts of questions about the bottles and milk and how much was to be give at a time. She weren't one of them as thinks they knows better than an old woman as has had to do with babies afore they was born or thought of.'

Not all Lady Lester's blandishments would induce Owen Ludlow to agree to her carrying off the baby then and there. Time must be allowed for Sir Hugh to be communicated with, and a letter received from him fully confirming all that Lady Lester had said of his willingness to adopt the child. And on one other point Owen Ludlow was determined, though Lady Lester demurred, and though, after all, when he came to think of it afterwards, what did it really signify to him what name the child should bear, when he was never likely to hear or see anything more of her? and this point was that the child should be named 'Pomona.' It was unreasonable, he felt, to insist upon this; but it was a slight salve to his conscience, though he was hardly conscious that it required salving, or that it gave him the slightest uneasiness; but it made him feel less weakly acquiescent to make some difficulty, even a childish unreasonable one.

'It is not a very pretty name,' Lady Lester said; 'and I am afraid Sir Hugh may not like it; but it has the advantage of being uncommon; and if you really wish it so much, of course it shall be so. I will telegraph to Sir Hugh the first thing to-morrow, and you will hear from him the following morning.'

So just for one more day, Owen Ludlow heard the baby's cry from the room up-stairs and the

sound of the rocking-chair on the floor, and saw the old nurse pottering up and down under the apple-tree, with the sunlight through the branches falling on the soft white bundle in her arms, and a stray blossom dropping now and then. Perhaps that day he felt something more nearly approaching the paternal sentiment than he had ever done before, such is the contrariness of human nature; and once he found himself hoping that Sir Hugh's reply might not be favourable, and that he might, after all, have to take the baby Pomona into the calculations of his future life. But the next morning brought a hearty, manly letter from Sir Hugh, fully endorsing all that his wife had said, and thanking Owen Ludlow for agreeing to a plan that would so largely contribute to his wife's happiness.

And soon afterwards Lady Lester arrived with a responsible-looking nurse, and carried off the baby, with profuse expressions of gratitude to Owen Ludlow, and liberal tips to the servants; and when the carriage had driven away, and he turned back up the orchard path, it seemed as if he were returning from another funeral, or rather as if the funeral of two days before had been completed, and the baby buried with her mother; and the house seemed emptier than ever.

He gave a little gasp, as if it caught his breath, when, a few days later, he saw in a paper the announcement among the births, 'On May 30th, at Weymouth, the wife of Sir Hugh Lester of a daughter.'

But he was in the Rockies, and beyond the reach of English newspapers, when six months later, there was an account of the terrible railway accident in Scotland in which Sir Hugh Lester's two sons lost their lives; nor did he see the announcement, the following year, of the death of the baronet himself.

SOME VILLAINS OF FICTION, AND THEIR FATES.

WHILE a great deal has been written on the subject of the heroes and heroines of fiction, comparatively little notice has been taken of its Villains—a neglect, no doubt, richly merited. And yet one is tempted to think that many a favourite novel with its villain eliminated would prove dull reading enough. There is little room for the old-fashioned conventional villain in the new school of fiction, which substitutes for plot and thrilling story an elaborate analysis of character. In dealing, too, with the lives of everyday people, the melodramatic scoundrel would be out of place. Hence his absence from the pages of Miss Austen's works, in which the quiet country pursuits of our forefathers, while George III. was king, are so vividly described. It is therefore to the narrative authors of the romantic or realistic schools that we must turn to find the villain without alloy.

One might divide the rogues of fiction into certain classes, such as the hypocritical, the gentlemanly, the blood-thirsty, and so forth. Sir Walter Scott has several types of rogues—the learned rogue, like Rashleigh Osbaldistone; the unscrupu-

lous and scheming lawyer, like Glossin in 'Guy Mannering'; the wild and lawless rogue, like Dirk Hatternick, the Dutch smuggler captain. In some novels we find the villain claiming no small part of our sympathy, and Scott confessed that his rogue always, in spite of him, turned out his hero. Poetic justice, however, is generally meted out to his evil characters, and many of them come to violent ends. Richard Varney, on his capture, after the murder of the Countess of Leicester—disclaiming to drag on the remainder of his life a degraded outcast, and not wishing that his fate should make a holiday to the vulgar herd—swallowed some strong poison he was wont to carry about his person, and was found dead in his cell—the habitual expression of sneering sarcasm still on his face. His accomplice, the ungainly Anthony Foster, perished miserably in the cell whither he had fled to escape arrest, forgetting the key of the spring-lock by which alone his egress could be effected. Dirk Hatternick, the accomplice of Glossin in kidnapping Henry Bertram, and the murderer of Meg Merrilies, hanged himself in the condemned ward of the jail, which had likewise witnessed the death of Glossin at the same hands. The unprincipled Lord Dalgarno, on his way to fight the duel with Nigel Olifaunt at Canlet Moat, was shot by Colepepper, or one of his ruffians, in Enfield Chase; while the Alsatian Captain himself did not survive the fierce attack of Richard Monipples. One of the most interesting of Scott's characters is Rashleigh Osbaldistone, with his learning and his want of moral principle—the clever man of that country where clever men were scarce. Nevertheless, he is a knave, and, as a reward for his treason, perishes at the hand of Rob Roy, with the hatred of his cousin Francis strong within him, even in the moment of death. Jobson, the rascal attorney—a very favourite type with Scott, as with Dickens—had his name struck off the list of attorneys, and was reduced to poverty and contempt.

For a mind such as Thackeray's the study of evil had a certain fascination, and the character of his rogues being always carefully drawn, we see them as they are actually to be found in life—rather weak than wicked, vain and selfish more often than malignant. Any good which may be found in them he never fails to bring out. Barry Lyndon is a type of the adventurous scoundrel—not without certain redeeming features—dear to the heart of Fielding and Smollett. The son of a man of fashion, Barry was possessed of many accomplishments. He had a quick ear and a fine voice; he stepped a minuet gravely and gracefully, and was unrivalled at a hornpipe and a jig. His reading consisted exclusively of novels. After a round of adventures, in which he exhibits almost every vice save that of cowardice, he passes the latter end of his life in the Fleet Prison. Thackeray had a horror of gambling, and its evil effects form the moral of many of his tales. One example is to be found in the history of Mr Deuceace, the son, more sinned against than sinning, of the Earl of Crabs. His miserable fate is not rendered less pathetic by being described in the vernacular of Jeames Yellowplush—seated, shabby and unkempt, with

a poorly-dressed, ill-used woman by his side, on a bench in the Bois de Boulogne as the Earl and his bride drive past him without recognition. Of Thackeray's other more or less unprincipled characters, Lord Steyne is a striking example. A meaner but equally unprincipled character was Sir Pitt Crawley, who died at the good old age of fourscore. Barnes Newcome is the picture of the hypocritical rogue, outwardly irreproachable, of whom Dickens has given us so many examples. Of his fate the novelist says: 'My impression is that he married again, and it is my fervent hope that his present wife bullies him'—a wish the reader must cordially reciprocate.

No writer has a more plentiful supply of villains of all kinds than Dickens. Many of his characters are meant to exemplify different vices—as, for instance, unscrupulous selfishness in Jonas Chuzzlewit; or hypocrisy in Uriah Heep and Pecksniff; or, again, miserliness and its effects in Ralph Nickleby. Some of his figures are undoubtedly melodramatic, as Sir Mulberry Hawk or Carker; the gentleman rogue is one of the least happy of his portraits. Grotesquely horrible figures, such as Quilp, appealed strongly to his imagination, and have never been more powerfully depicted. Most of his rogues meet with the just reward of their deeds, as became the moral purpose of his books. Jonas Chuzzlewit, after attempting to poison his old father Anthony, and after murdering Montagu Tigg, himself takes poison as he is being carried off to jail. The first word he had been taught to spell was 'gain,' and the second 'money.' Gashford, the Secretary to Lord George Gordon—who imposes on the credulity of his master, and prompts the rioters to burn the Warren, where Geoffrey Haredale lived—also commits suicide. The villain Rudge, the father of Barnaby, came to the gallows. Ralph Nickleby took his own life—a moral to all such as are of a hard and grasping nature—'he had torn a rope from one of the old trunks, and hanged himself on an iron hook immediately below the trap-door in the ceiling to which his son had looked so often in childish terror fourteen years ago.'

The description of Fagin in Newgate awaiting execution is among the most thrilling in the pages of fiction; the face of the old Jew, retaining no human expression but rage and terror, haunts us as that of Quilp or Quasimodo. Hardly less terrible is the scene of Bill Sikes's death there in Jacob's Island, 'where the buildings are the dirtiest; and the vessels on the rivers blackest with dust of colliers and the smoke of close-built, low-roofed houses.' From the parapet of such a house it was that he fell in his effort to escape his pursuers, five-and-thirty feet into Folly Ditch, followed even to death by his faithful dog. The railway engine, employed as an instrument of fate, lends a tragic interest to the death of the smiling villain Carker with his white and glistening teeth. He uttered a shriek as he looked upon the engine, and 'saw the red eyes bleared and dim in the daylight close upon him—was beaten down, caught up, and whirled away upon a jagged mill that spun him round and round, and struck him limb from limb, and licked his stream of life up with its fiery heat, and cast his mutilated fragments in the air.' Rogue Riderhood in 'Our Mutual Friend'

perishes in a struggle with Bradley Headstone, near Plashwater Bridge. Both were found lying under the ooze and scum, behind one of the rotting gates of the lock. Quilp, the almost inhuman dwarf of Tower Hill, drowned himself as he was on the point of being arrested for felony—an appropriate ending to a life of moral and physical squalor.

Of Dickens's less malignant characters, Squeers, with his one eye, and forehead villainously low, adds the theft of a title-deed to his ill treatment of schoolboys, and is transported. Uriah Heep and Steerforth's valet Littimer are consistent hypocrites, till we lose sight of them in prison as No. 27 and No. 28—Uriah, the 'unblest person going, suffering the penalties of the law for fraud, forgery, and conspiracy—a deep plot for a large sum; while the valet expiates the robbing of his young master the night before they were going abroad. That arch-hypocrite Pecksniff lingers on shabby and out-at-elbows with drink, his worst enemy.

The fiction of half a century or so ago produced such a plentiful supply of highwaymen, cracksmen, and other heroes of the Newgate Calendar, that Thackeray exclaimed, 'The public will hear of nothing but rogues.' Fielding had described the adventures of Jonathan Wild, and now Jack Sheppard was made the hero of a tale. Dickens produced 'Oliver Twist,' and Bulwer-Lytton a series of stories in which the harshness of the criminal law and various other social grievances were illustrated in the careers of such as Paul Clifford. Some of his rogues come to very melodramatic ends. Gawtreys, the false coiner in 'Night and Morning,' is a vivid picture of a man well educated and full of animal spirits, suffering for another man's crime, and at war with society. He is shot in attempting to escape from the Paris police—falling from the parapet of the house with a groan or rather howl of rage, despair, and agony, which appalled even the hardest on whose ear it came. Lord Lilburne, in many respects more guilty than Gawtreys, escapes the outward retribution which overtakes crime; the novelist's idea being, that if vice is to be punished it must be from within. 'The Lilburnes of this hollow world are not to be pelted with the soft roses of poetical justice.' The brutal ruffian Houseman—whose only redeeming trait is the love of his daughter—is contrasted with the scholarly Eugene Aram, who yet is led to commit murder; showing once again that intellect and morality may in some instances be divorced. Houseman, in spite of his crimes, died in his bed without violence, having maintained himself by dressing flax. His life, however, was several times attempted by the mob; and when he died, his body was buried secretly at dead of night. Arbaces, the wily Egyptian priest, who crushed all who stood in his path in the 'Last Days of Pompeii,' was himself crushed in that supreme convulsion of nature by the shattering of the tall column that supported the bronze statue of Augustus.

Among Wilkie Collins's rogues one of the most interesting is Count Fosco in 'The Woman in White.' He was compounded of two almost distinct individualities. On one side of his character he is vain, fond of music, and of pet animals—white mice, a cockatoo, and a couple of canaries

—on the other, the calm conspirator with the cold glitter in his unfathomable gray eyes. As a definite moral ending was expected by the public, the novelist tells us how his body was discovered in the Morgue at Paris. In 'Armadale,' the villainy of Dr Bashwood is cast in the shade by that of the would-be poisoner, Miss Gwilt, who puts an end to her own life, on the failure of her scheme, in Bashwood's sanatorium.

Charles Reade generally employs a principal and a subsidiary rogue of a more or less conventional type to show off the charms of the heroine and the resources of his virile hero to the best advantage. Thus we have Woodlaw and Wylie in 'Foul Play,' Richard Hardie and Skinner, and many others who suffer the just reward of their deeds. John Meadows, with the cool head and iron will in his search for wealth and respectability, nevertheless incurs a charge of theft; but in illustration of the principle of the book—'It is Never too Late to Mend'—shows promise of repentance and a hope of better things in the new land whither he sails with little Hannah and his old mother of threescore years and ten. The more despicable villain Crawley, left to his own resources, practises at the County Courts in his old neighbourhood, and drinks with all his clients, who are of the lowest imaginable order. Sir Charles Pomander belongs to the 'bold, bad Baronet' type of character; and the persecutor of 'Peg Woffington,' rich, handsome, and witty, with a hard head, a tough stomach, and no heart at all, has many points of resemblance with the Sir Hargrave Pollexfen of 'Sir Charles Grandison' or the Lovelace of 'Clarissa Harlowe.' Dickens's similar character, Sir John Chester, is killed in the duel with his enemy, Geoffrey Haredale. Less enviable, perhaps, was the fate of Pomander condemned for eight years to drag the chain of a life from which all pleasure had gone out.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXV.—'HE THAT *will* BE RICH!'

GEORGE SUFFIELD, the elder, arrived in Lancashire early in the evening, and drove home at once to Holdsworth Hall. His son, he found, was away—had been away, Tummas said, since ever 'th' mester' had gone yesterday. He had left no word with Tummas where he had gone ('Nay,' grunted Tummas, 'Mester George doan't trust me wi' nought; he believes sae much i' th' black fellow!'), so that Mr Suffield had no resource but to wait, with what patience he could muster, for his return, or for the morning.

He slept ill, and rose betimes, while it was yet dark, and went to the works. The air was already filled with the laboured breathing of the engines and the whirl of bobbins and clatter of looms. It did him good to hear these sounds, and it made him proud, more than all the mumble and gossip, the speeches and the 'Hear, hears' of the House of Commons. He said to himself 'Ha, ha,' like the war-horse among the trumpets, and the thunder of the regiments; he shook himself together, and longed to be in

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among the crowds of workers, with the mon-
strous music of the machinery in his ears.

'I shouldn't ha' listened to Joan!' he said to himself. 'That I shouldn't!'

The old lodge-keeper stared a moment or two, speechless at sight of him: it was the first working day after the Christmas holidays.

'If here bain't th' owd mester himsen! Aw'm right glad to see tha, mon!' exclaimed the lodge-keeper, as if he were himself the master, giving his hand to Suffield. 'Ee! but it'll set th' folk up to see yo'!'

'Thank you, John—thank you,' said Suffield, heartily shaking the hand of his old retainer. 'I'm just come down on a special matter o' business. My son, I suppose, left no word if he would be here to-day?'

'Mester George? Not he! He left no word wi' me.—But how's tha able to leave th' business o' th' country?—th' making o' Laws and Acts o' Parlyment and sech? How's things, mon? For we're as ignorant here as peas in a pod.'

'Well, John,' said Suffield, 'th' Queen has not axed me yet to be her Prime Minister; nor made yo', John, a Justice o' th' Peace.' And so he walked on, while John closed the gate, laughing to himself. 'Th' owd mester!' he murmured. 'He aye likes his joke. Nae much th' matter wi' a mon as can crack his joke.'

The old 'mester,' spite of having heavy stuff on his mind, could not refrain from giving himself the pleasure of a walk through the workrooms of the several buildings. It was agreeable to him—and it would have been instructive to a stranger—to see how all faces lighted up on beholding him, and how cheerily he was greeted by those whom he addressed, managers, foremen, or operatives: the abounding goodness of his nature touched them all.

'Who's in th' new building?' he asked of a manager at his elbow.

The manager answered that So-and-so was—a trustworthy person whom Suffield himself had left in charge.

'I'll go and have a look at it,' said he.

Arrived in the new building, where the special printing machines were at work, of the drawings for which Daniel Trichinopoly had made stolen copies, Suffield questioned the manager in charge: Where were the drawings kept? In the office, the man believed. Was that rule strictly carried out, that no one but those engaged in the building and sworn to secrecy should be admitted? It was. Had the manager ever seen Daniel Trichinopoly there? Never. Where were the keys kept? In the lodge with the other keys.—Suffield made little account of the last two answers; for he remembered that a year ago, when no one was supposed to be in the building or to be able to get into the building, Ainsworth had declared he had seen Daniel there.

Thence he went to the counting-house. The book-keepers and pen-men in general were not come yet; there were but that clerk who took the turn of early work, and an old woman dusting the desks. Suffield marched into the inner office, and up-stairs into the sanctum that used to be his own. He knew where the plans of the new machines had been wont to be kept. He went to the safe, of which he, as well as his son, carried a key, and opened a drawer: there were

the plans. He took them out and unrolled them on the table; he believed they looked dirtier, and they certainly bore marks of pencil-tracing. How could George have been so careless as allow the black Daniel opportunity to handle and use them?

He put the plans away—in the safe again—and then he sat down and thought. If the black Daniel had been able to play his own rig with these plans, what might he not have done with other things? George was palpably careless. There stood an Account Book left out; and there in a drawer was a key. There might be nothing of consequence in the drawer; nevertheless—Mr Suffield's business experience declared that a key neglected, for whatever reason, meant a weak link in security; and that a drawer left open was a temptation to open drawers. He went to the door and asked the clerk in the outer office, 'Does Trichinopoly come much here?'

'He's mostly up at the Hall with Mr George, and sometimes in the City,' answered the clerk.

In the City office, of course, thought Suffield—helping with the export to India and the Straits. He was about to lock the safe up again, with the resolution to go through everything carefully with George when that young gentleman should appear, when he noticed the cheque-book of the firm lying before him—a volume which was to most cheque-books as a folio is to a duodecimo. He took it out and began to look at it. As he read one counterfoil, and another, and another, he occasionally raised his head with an amazed air, and then resumed his scrutiny with contracted brows.

'I don't understand this, my lad,' he said at length. 'There's more here than I bargained for. But I must wait.'

So he resolutely closed the book, locked it up in the safe, and took his way to the Hall for breakfast. Tummas would gossip with 'th' owd mester,' but for all that, breakfast was soon set upon the table. His solitary meal did not encourage cheerful reflection. Why, he asked himself, was he sitting there alone? Had he been weak in humouring his wife, and giving himself up to the pursuit of parliamentary honour, and had he been precipitate in handing the entire control of his business over to his son? He thought it somewhat hard; but he saw that even at fifty a man must buy his experience like the most reckless youngster.

After breakfast he sat a while, and looked at the paper, and looked at the clock. At length he rose, went into the hall, summoned Tummas to brush his hat and coat, and set off to walk to the station, as aforetime, to take the train into town: perhaps, he thought, his son would go to the City first.

In the City office he found the manager and the clerks in their places, but no George. The manager, however, said that 'Mr George,' he believed, was in Liverpool on business, and would probably be back after lunch; so Suffield went forth into the City to see how the world of Lancashire commerce was moving: he had known nothing of that world, except from the newspapers and the gossip of his son, for a good many months. He went to the Athenaeum and read the telegrams of news and of prices; and then he went on 'Change. He exchanged salu-

tations and he listened, and the more he listened the more bewildered he became; he overheard whispers about cotton, which—he was certain—were hushed or changed into another venue as he approached. One old acquaintance was franker with him.

'Well, George,' said he, 'what's the game to-day? It's ages since we've seen you here. Is it "futures" or "spot"? There's not much, you know, in the way of futures. They seem to be covered mostly by this rascal that's trying to "corner"; but, between you and me, George, I believe there's more than a Parsee or two in that corner: there's somebody behind them.'

'There *is* a corner, then, in cotton?' said Suffield.

'Is a corner?' echoed the acquaintance. 'But I forgot: you're only a Parliament man now. Well, there *is* a corner; and there isn't a corner: for, it remains to be seen if it can stand the January business. No man, not even Morris Ranger, can keep the market in a corner for ever. Speculation is a blessing, but not as some men speculate. This particular corner, I believe, George, is going to become an open square. There'll be another big arrival this week, and then we'll see.' And so the old acquaintance left him.

Suffield returned to the office, where he found his son busily hearing and speaking through the telephone. He nodded to his father, murmuring aside, 'I heard you had been here, dad,' and went on with his occupation. After a little while George hung up the telephone mouthpiece and sat down.

'And what,' he asked, 'has brought you down here, dad?'

'You haven't got M'Fie's letter, then?' said the elder. 'Where, my lad, is your Daniel Trichinopoly?'

'Where?' echoed George; and the father saw the son turn paler than he had ever known him.

'Let me tell you, my lad, so far as I know,' said Suffield; and recounted to his son the story of the Philosopher from the beginning to the end.

'Gone!—is he?' said George, gnawing his thumb, and evidently putting a constraint upon himself. 'With copies of the plans? He certainly ought to have been here to-day, and he is not! The scoundrel!—Wait a moment,' said he suddenly; 'I'll make an inquiry.'

He turned round to his writing-table and scribbled a note. He blew through a tube, and a clerk appeared. He handed the note sealed. 'Wait for an answer,' said he; 'and make as much haste as you can.'

When the clerk was gone he explained his action to his father. 'You know,' said he—'you remember I told you—that Daniel put that hundred Uncle Harry left him into the bank. He has been speculating with it, I believe, and made something more of it. If he is really gone, he'll have taken that with him.'

'Just so,' said his father. 'And it seems to me, George, my lad, that there must ha' been a deal of speculation going on inside the firm, for him to go against th' rule. When I was looking after the business myself I made it a rule—"No betting on horse-races or gambling in stocks

here!" I'd seen too much harm come o' them, and I had made up my mind that no man that betted or speculated was fit to serve w' me. I did not think, my lad, o' saying ought like that to you when I put you in charge, because I thought you had a proper, straight, clear business head on you.'

'But, my dear dad,' said George, 'everybody speculates in these days: where's the harm in speculation?'

'The great harm in speculation, my lad,' said his father, with something like sternness, 'is that it makes you unfit for proper business. When I was a youngster I betted a sovereign on a horse; that sovereign became five; but what became of those five I never could tell: it was "lightly come, lightly go." And I said to myself, "We'll ha' no more o' this!" But harm or no harm, the thing for you is that it must be either business or speculation: the man isn't born yet that can do both properly. If he tries to do it, he comes a cropper with either the one or the other.—Hast thou been speculating?' he asked plainly.

'Well—yes, father,' answered George, much disquieted by the elder's direct question and uncompromising tone; 'I have.'

'Humph!' exclaimed his father; 'I'm disappointed in tha, lad.—Cotton, I suppose?'

'Yes, father; cotton.'

'Much?'

'Well—that depends upon what you might think much.'

'We'll go into that presently. I keep hearing about a corner in cotton: dost tha know ought o' that?'

'Yes; I know something of it.'

At that critical point the clerk returned and handed George a note.

'It is from the bank manager,' said he, when he had opened it. "'Mr Trichinopoly himself withdrew his account on December 22d.'" That's more than a week ago! It's the day he went for his holiday!'

'Drew the money and went off to London at once, I suppose,' said his father. 'Now, we'd better see that he hasn't drawn anything of ours.'

EILEAN DHU AND ITS FREQUENTERS.

As the advance of our so-called civilisation drives many of our rarer and more interesting 'uncivilised' friends farther and farther from ordinary ken, we seek to keep their images before us as they have recently appeared. So we drop down by boat towards the quaint and perverse island that is an epitome of a kingdom. A counterpart of a lion couchant in appearance, too, so it may be taken to represent the Scottish lion. It has at least a certain Scottish persistence in its character, and declines to be readily moulded under modern conditions. The Black-backed Gull is calling hoarsely as we approach, and circles around overhead with its many comrades; for this has long been a favourite haunt in the breeding season, and they know but too well, from increasing experience, that a boat bears only ene-

mies of their race. The nests are scattered about amongst the rocks and heath with the crudest of efforts after construction, and very embryonic attempts at concealment. The general colour of the eggs, and the very simplicity of the grass 'wisp' in a slight hollow, are indeed their greatest security. And this holds good with all its fellows about, whether Lesser Black-backed or Herring Gull. The piping Oyster-catcher, with its restless excitability and constant vociferations, dashes hither and thither, from shore to heathery knoll and back again, racing energetically along the beach after it drops upon it, and living in a mingled fool's paradise of having misled the intruder from its nest, and a purgatory of fear lest it should not have done so. If it only kept quiet, it would do better, as the eggs among the gravel of the beach are generally safe enough from an ordinary eye. What a row to be sure, as if all the world were after you! Your manners have not that repose that mark the proper aristocrat. You are only a wild-duck, startled out of your equanimity and your nest. There goes another with equal trepidation. They lie close, and conceal themselves and their nests dexterously, but beyond that they haven't an idea. In place of slipping through the heather and rising some distance off, they lose their heads, make all the row they can in their terror and surprise, and practically give up the game.

The rarer ducks we do not come upon in their accustomed haunts. Yet in these shallow holes under the fallen rocks the red-breasted Merganser, or Sawbill Duck, and even the Orange-bosomed Goosander, used to deposit their eggs, and trust to escaping the eyes of the enemy. But a greater and more ruthless enemy than man has too often found them out, and lived in too close proximity; for the Gray or Hooded Crow is too partial to eggs, and finds this mode of living so easy and agreeable, that it long made its nest in that aged elder-tree up amongst that debris of fallen rocks. Since our last raid upon it, as an enemy of rarity and beauty, it has shifted its nursery, but cannot be very far away. In its near vicinity were the nests of the brilliant Sheldrake, far under the larger stones, so as to be practically in burrows; yet they have not escaped the ravages of these gray rascals, and for once we do not startle a single Sheldrake to-day. Have these two ducks practically decided that it is of no use attempting to rear successors under the trying conditions, and left us thus so much the poorer? It looks very like it. Ha! here is one returning prodigal, we remark, as the Raven skulks along close to the top of the hill, and crosses the water in deadly fear and with indecent haste. It will not leave us long, however; and although it has not returned to the barrow-load of sticks on the rocky ledge, where it so long pre-empted the location, it has, like its gray congener, chosen a corner close by, but better hidden. The bold cragsman that invaded the sacred precincts behind that rocky ledge, when last it was so occupied, will never again disturb

your repose, and this year's progeny at any rate are practically safe to follow in your 'black but comely' footsteps. For a beautiful bird you are, although your ways are as dark as your sable plumes. The shepherd and the keeper are alike your deadly enemies. You have indeed, Mr Raven, no friend in feathers or in broadcloth, and to one and all appear as a type of the 'gentleman in black.'

But beautiful as you are in your glossy blues and blacks, how can you expect full consideration for your claims when you choose such very distinguished company? Just 'round the corner' on the higher part of the cliff, dwells, as it long has dwelt, the bold and beautiful Peregrine Falcon. I am grieved to think how many of the daring birds I have seen drop, never again to wing the empyrean from that rocky hold; yet, in despite of heavy losses and constant danger, there is a fascination in this bird-haunted island that enables the gay wooer of either sex soon to secure a new mate and continue the occupation. Like an old-time robber Highland chief in his eyrie, he or she, with such a point of vantage, will never fail of a mate; and is the world not made for the bold? How they flash out from the front of the cliff; and how we sympathise with the bold birds that have 'columbaria' in the cliff caves around a limited range, and seabirds at hand for a change, and duck for Sundays—without the green peas—and an occasional grouse for high-days and holidays. No wonder their wild 'keep' is always tenanted, despite periodic executions; for is not the female falcon the bolder and bigger and stronger of the two, and why should she hesitate to replace the slaughtered bride, at the prompt call of the bereaved widower, although in this the nesting season her risks are greater, and the demands of the young perforce draw her ever within the sphere of danger? With what pride she must look down over her domain, as she views her mate sweep back from the further shore across the intervening sea, his wings cleaving the air with a swift snap, and screeching gull or hoarse-voiced raven taking care to give it abundant sea-room.

The Kestrel, that used to nest on the other cliff, near the inquisitive rowan-tree, peering far over the ledge to watch the rare picnic parties that bivouacked beneath, has given up nesting apparently in this once happy isle, and has probably 'moved West.' Like the Yankee settler on the frontier, the place has got too civilised. Even the gay sea-swallows, that keep such good time in their advent, and are so wonderfully loyal to the place of their first choice, and in all probability the place of their birth, are beginning to thin off—or be thinned off! Is there no haven of rest to be left for those creatures that look askance at civilisation? Cannot we do something for our more bohemian brethren who love not the leash, the tether, or the hencoop? Do they not give us much in return for any little protection we can give them? What delight to view their displays of confident speed and power! What an insight into older conditions, that may yet one day be renewed conditions, when the cunning and the weak must give way to the bold and the strong, and the race again be to the swift. If we could but eliminate the hand of man from this natural gathering of rare creatures, what an

interesting study the island would provide us. In a ring-fence of greater security than Waterton's, with green to the very summit all the year, we have only to remove a few sheep or cattle to see the islet spring up into a forest of varied seedlings. Would the falcons increase then till they drove off their scared prey? Would the ducks increase and find shelter until the falcon dared not interfere? Would an internecine war take the place of the war with man, or would all settle down into a sort of recognised system of balance, in which too many of the 'stock' of the falcon would not be 'killed down,' and too many comrades would not be permitted to join in the foray? An over-accumulation of kinglets would not be likely, and each pair would keep its own rocky domain.

But the duck would revel in the deep undergrowth and heath; the gulls would hunt for the hidden nests and devour the eggs; the Grey Crow would consider that all these things were made by Heaven for its use! The Sheldrake, too, would return to the natural burrows; and the Sawbill utilise every suitable hollow. We should not have removed, perhaps we should have hardly lessened, the severity of the struggle for existence; but yet it would be less violent and artificial. Are we to be able to preserve the inhabitants of these spots where the rarer creatures gather; or will another ten years see as great a diminution of, and indeed, in some cases, disappearance of them, as the last decade has done? Will the otter still be able to green the turf near his lair; or would he decline to accept life under easy-going conditions, and seek some sterner scene of labour, should any protection be vouchsafed? There is so much that such an isle, under a kindly but observant eye, could tell us about; so much that we particularly wish to know about, that it seems a pity these little rendezvous for birds 'not generally known' should not be protected, in the interests of lovers of nature and of human nature!

ELSIE.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

WE were sorry when the vicar died, as he did in the following May, rather suddenly. I had reckoned on his joining our hands at midsummer, having a liking for his quiet impressiveness, so different from the sleepy automatism we had been accustomed to at Norton Priors. His reading of a burial would make all eyes wet; but, like April rain, there was a touch of sun in it, and the mourners went away easier at heart from the comfort he had given them. He had a way of joining happy couples which made the homeliest faces beautiful, for the sense that heaven itself had blessed them, and that there was no 'for worse' about it. And when the christenings came, he would turn every heart towards the little ones by his tenderness of way and the love for them beaming from his eyes.

Elsie was reminding me of these things, and telling how she came to admire and to work for him, as we walked in the lane the night of the funeral day. It was late, for she had been at a bedside at Nemeton till the 'bus had set out to meet the last up-train. I had been to the

funeral, and had seen Henry St John there, but was afraid to tell her so, and she avoided asking, though her thoughts must have turned to him many times, as she walked to and fro beside me talking gently of his father.

The moon rose big over Arbury Wood, yellowing to brighter gold as it mounted higher on its way; and I could see by its light the soft velvet of Elsie's eyes, and that something deep down in them which I could never fathom. I lost it as we turned for the last time and neared the mill; but as we stood beneath the privet arch leading to the garden, I saw it again, as she looked across to the moon dreamily.

'And yet there was a time,' said she, without turning her head, 'when I disliked the vicar almost to hatred. I thought him hard, and capable even of cruelty to any one who might stand in the way of any cherished wish or plan. He was'—

She shrank suddenly into the shadow of the arch, pulling me with her, and staring with wide eyes across at the stile of the croft. I looked too, and saw a tall dark figure approach it from the other side and lean on the top rail. And in the sheen of the moon I saw that it was Henry St John. Elsie trembled, and I could hear the quick thud, thud of her heart. A great ache grew to mine, and I was ready to groan when I looked across at the pale beauty of Henry's face as he gazed up at the house, thinking of Elsie. She was in my arms, and there was the man she loved.—Ah! the pain of it! For a moment my sight seemed to go; then a hot rage sent the blood round me, and I could have raised her up and hurled her across to him; but that, too, went off, and gave way to a mad sense of possession, which tightened my hold on her as she leaned heavily upon me. But she knew nothing of it, for, as I peered close at the pale oval of her face, I saw that her eyes were shut, and that her parted lips had lost their redness. I glanced back at the stile; but Henry was gone; then I laughed, and kissed Elsie's forehead passionately. Her lids quivered, and her eyes opened, staring absently up into mine, till memory came, and then she looked out again, trying gently to force herself from me.

'Let me go—how dare you!' she cried with sudden anger.

I loosed my hold, and stood still, the words ringing in my head strangely.

'Forgive me, George—I was hasty. I don't think I am quite well. Shall we say good-night?'

I said the word, and no more, and watched her glide away. But she turned again and ran back, and held her lips up for the kiss she had denied me. Could any man stand it? I caught her up and asked God to bless her always. And bless her He did in his own good way, though it was hard to see at the time that He had the handling of it.

For from that night Elsie was never the same to me. As our marriage day neared she appeared to lose all heart in things, all desire to say or do; and seemed no better than a parched lily that hangs its head in hopelessness. Her fresh comeliness left her; her face thinned down; and sometimes her eyes had in them a look like a spent deer when it falls and awaits the hounds at its

heels. I could bear it no longer, and saying nothing to any one, set out for London to where Henry St John had gone the day after the funeral. It was Saturday night when I arrived; but I traced him on the following morning to a big church in the suburbs, where I saw him in his vestments, assisting in the service. I sat till it was over, and then sought him at the Clergy House, as they called it, adjoining the church.

As simply as I could, I told him how things were—that he must marry Elsie, and not I. He listened quietly, his face a shade paler, and his blue eyes softening and hardening by turns. When I had done, he got on his feet, and paced up and down in a troubled way. I sat still, feeling very rough and coarse in such a fine room and beside such a man. He sat down again, and now I saw that his eyes had hardened and remained so. In a slow, deliberate way, he began to explain how he was placed; that out of love of his father, and a strong predilection for the work of his Church, he had resolved to devote himself to it, and to make no other ties. He had doubted the sincerity of Elsie's refusal, but had accepted it, from pride partly that he should be refused, and out of fear that he might for ever estrange himself from his parent by persisting in his suit. He had now reason to suspect that his father had seen Elsie, and prevailed upon her, by forcible arguments, to refuse him. I might have made this clear to him, but held my tongue, and let him go on, which he did eloquently, and with much good sense from his point of view.

But I thought of Elsie, and struck in impatiently. 'Sir,' said I, 'you can no more love mankind without first loving some one about you, than you can make a wheel without a hub. God made you two for each other, as He made the laws which show that every man can work better under the chastening influence of a good woman and of the home she hallows, than without such aid. But whether celibacy be right or not for one in your calling doesn't affect the duty before you. You have made Elsie love you, and you will mar, if not ruin her own life unless you take her to you and give her the loving support of yours. Man! man!—can you hesitate? Why, she's worth a thousand of you!'

'So she is, Crannock,' said he quietly and without offence at my outburst; 'and you don't know how your words try my fealty to the mission I have taken up.—Leave me; let me think it over; but don't hope. I may not lightly forswear principles such as mine. Go; and in a few days you or she shall hear from me, according as my decision shapes.'

And so I left him, and made my way to Norton Priors, which I reached after three days' absence. It surprised me to find the shop shut and nothing going on; but Dobson, across at the mill, seeing me staring about, walked over and made it clear. Jem and two of his children were down with typhoid fever; and Mrs Onslow had just sent for the doctor to see to Elsie, who had been sitting up with the little ones all night and had gone home feeling queer herself.

It was true enough; and in twenty-four hours Elsie was tossing about in her bed, delirious. I hung about the house, unable to do a thing, as

day followed day and she got lower and lower in the grip of the fever. It went to my heart to see her wasted face and her great eyes flaming so from their sockets, while her poor mad talk about Henry St John and the love she bore him nearly sent me mad too. But she got so weak at last that she could do no more than whisper, and that but seldom; and one night her mother and the doctor and I were all in the room together, expecting her to go every minute.

I had sent a telegram to Henry, telling him the news, and leaving it to himself to come or not as he liked. It was now past midnight, and the last 'bus had glided over the tan an hour ago, as I had seen from the open window. But while the minutes went on, and we sat saying nothing, a sound was borne in to my ears which set my pulse at the double. It was the faintest of sounds, hardly discernible above the hushed voice of the weir; but it drew nearer and nearer, till we could all hear the horse as it galloped its hardest towards us. It was muffled a minute as it came through Arbury Wood; but again the hoofs rang out, and in another three minutes were echoing like thunder in the quiet of the village. I looked from the window, and saw the horse on its haunches as the rider pulled up and leaped from the saddle. He saw my face at the casement, and I remember his breathless cry as he looked wildly up:

'Is she alive?—Elsie!—I've come to see her. Let me in, for God's sake!—She must not die!'

His voice rang into the room with odd effect on us all. Elsie heard it, and made a slight movement, murmuring his name. Then she breathed a faint little sigh; and the doctor bent his head anxiously, as if he feared her heart had stopped. But no—it was beating steadily; and he looked up with a light in his eyes, saying in a whisper that Elsie was saved.

I met Henry on the stairs, and told him what he had done. His head sank on my shoulder, and he wept like any girl. And I couldn't blame him, for my own eyes were wet, and my heart ready to split with its gladness. In such moments we do strange things, and what did I do then but kiss Henry on the temple, feeling drawn to him irresistibly. He had saved Elsie; and she loved him, and had every right to love him, comely as he was, and so tender-hearted.

I carried on the mill for a year or two after that, and was always glad to hear news of their happiness away in Hampshire, where they had settled. But I sold the old place to Higgins at last, and the carpentering to a brother of Dobson's; for poor Jem was in the churchyard along with his young ones—and then I went Winchester way to say good-bye. It was then I had my last sight of Elsie as she sat in the Rectory garden, making some tiny clothes, with soft hope in her eyes and gladness. And because she was happy, so was I; and they all thought, as they should, that I was not much the worse for my loss. So I came out to Melbourne, and let time and hard work soften it down to one of those might-have-beens which we solitaries muse of when the pipe is alight and old faces shape in the curl of the smoke.

Sweet Elsie! She has gone her way long syne, as tender things will; but she remembered me

at the last, and sent me a braid of her hair, with a sisterly word or two and a blessing, to which Henry added, 'God's will be done!' And so it all came back at the sound of the fiddle; and when I asked the lady what she'd been playing, she said it was Schubert's 'Adieu de Béranger.'

THE 'REDEMPTIONERS.'

'THE cruelty of our laws against debtors, without distinction of honest or dishonest, is the shame of our nation. I am persuaded the honestest man in England, when by necessity he is compelled to break, will early fly out of the kingdom rather than submit. To stay here—this is the consequence: as soon as he breaks, he is proscribed as a criminal, and has thirty to sixty days to surrender both himself and all that he has to his creditors. If he fails to do it, he has nothing before him but the gallows, without benefit of clergy. If he surrenders, he is not sure but he shall be thrown into jail for life by the Commissioners only on pretence that they doubt his oath. What must the man do? If he carries away his effects, he is a knave, and cheats his creditors. If he stays here, he is starved in a jail, and must end his days by a lingering death.'

Thus wrote Daniel Defoe. In his time, debtors were frequently compelled, in seeking means to extricate themselves from their embarrassments, to consent to anything, if they thereby could avoid the horrors of the debtors' prison. In many cases they took advantage of a custom that, in one form or another, had the sanction of antiquity, and being generally able-bodied men, they placed themselves in the hands of some merchant or agent, who, having effected an arrangement with the creditors, took possession of the unfortunate debtors, and hurrying them to the nearest seaport, shipped them abroad, generally to Virginia or Maryland, as so much merchandise. Sometimes the dealer accompanied his cargo, in order, if possible, to obtain a better price at the end of the voyage.

Arrived at their destination, the captives—to give them their real name—were sold to any planter whose offer would recoup the agent for the sum he had expended in purchase and transit and also allow him a handsome profit. By the terms of this sale the captive was bound to serve his new master for several years, his liberty being nominally secured at the end of that period; and from the hope of redemption and deliverance thus held out to him, the term 'Redemptioner' came to be applied to these unfortunates. But any hopes that the Redemptioner might cherish of his ultimate liberation soon proved fallacious, and he found himself plunged into fresh embarrassments long before his period of servitude had expired. Charges were made upon him for clothing, for tobacco, even for the necessities of life—charges which he had no means of meeting, however good his inclination; and too late he found that he had, in fact, become a slave, without money, without rights, and without hope. Such friends as he had were in England, and probably had forgotten him altogether; perhaps, if even they remembered him, they were without the means of assisting him.

And the chance of money reaching the individual for whom it was intended was in those days very small. Pacific railways and 'ocean greyhounds' were unknown in the 'good old times,' and communication was slow and insecure.

Some of these Redemptioners were of course more fortunate than others, and had friends and connections more powerful and more kindly disposed, and such often ultimately obtained their freedom. But these were the exception, and not the rule, and, generally speaking, the unhappy victim laboured on from year to year, his 'redemption' receding farther and farther into the distance, till at last death put an end to his sufferings.

The dealers and merchants who carried on this shameful traffic combined the functions of the modern debt collector and the emigration agent, and traded chiefly from Belfast and Londonderry to Maryland and Virginia, though there also was a brisk trade done from Holland and Germany to the above-named colonies. These dealers were usually known as 'White Guinea Men.' They had often heavy losses, arising from the crowded state of the vessels in which the captives were conveyed; but the gains were very large, and the traffic consequently continued to flourish. On one occasion, in 1793, the yellow fever broke out in Baltimore, and no domestic servants or 'helps' could be obtained, owing to the very natural and prevalent dread of the disease. But a 'White Guinea Man' arriving from Germany, and hearing of the 'plague,' and also that no nurses were to be had in the city, conceived the idea of doing a good stroke of business, and at the same time getting rid of his cargo of Redemptioners and other deluded and trepanned emigrants. Sailing up to the city, he made known that he had 'at a good price, a few healthy servants, generally between seventeen and twenty-one years of age. Their time will be disposed of by applying on board this brig.' No doubt he reaped an excellent harvest, but one might be pardoned for hoping that he himself did not escape without a touch of 'Yellow Jack.'

The Redemptioners proper were, of course, not the only unfortunates who wore out hope and life upon the plantations of Virginia and Maryland. There were also the victims of the nefarious 'kidnappers,' men who amassed money through the credulity of intending emigrants, especially of those of the poorer class, to whom the country to which they were bound was veritably 'an unknown land.'

We have not quite rid ourselves of this species of kidnappers in these days, if we may judge by occasional revelations in police courts with regard to some emigration agents; and it will be readily understood that if such deceptions and frauds are possible now, they could be practised much more readily then.

These kidnappers had their regularly-appointed agents and offices, and a contemporary writer refers to these as follows: 'That house which they there are entering is an office where servants for the plantations bind themselves to be miserable as long as they live, without a special Providence prevents it. These fine fellows, who look like footmen upon a holiday, crept into cast suits of their masters', that want quality with deportment answerable to their apparel, are

kidnappers who walk the 'Change and other parts of the town in order to seduce people who want services, and young folks crost in love, and under an unsuccessful mind to go beyond the seas, getting so much a head of masters of ships and merchants who go over for every wretch they trepan into this misery.'

Others, too, there were among these 'white slaves' sharing their hard fate and fare, their desperate and hopeless condition, men who had been in their time in a good social position in England, but who, by some strange and unexpected reverse of fortune, an unsuccessful conspiracy, a lost battle, had been placed at the mercy of the ruling powers. Nor these alone; many others, upon whom sentence had been passed, found themselves doomed to the life-long misery of the plantations; and the gallant soldier, the desperate adventurer, the deluded emigrant, the hardened criminal, all met a common fate.

There was also a regular trade in ordinary household servants, whose condition was superior to that of the Redemptioner, in that it was to some extent regulated by special enactments. Conditional servitude, indeed, under indentures or covenants, had long existed in Virginia. Men were transported there at an expense of eight pounds or so, and were sometimes sold for forty, or fifty, or even sixty pounds. The supplying of 'white servants' became a regular business; and a class of dealers arose in England, nicknamed 'Spirits,' who sought to persuade young people to embark for America as for a land of plenty. In fact, they were sold in England, to be resold in Virginia.

In the colonies, the average price, about the year 1672, for white servants bound for five years was ten pounds or so; but for negroes, twenty to twenty-five pounds. According to the Virginia State Laws, these servants, after their term had expired, could not legally leave their employment without their masters' certificate. If, however, they did so, any one harbouring them or giving them shelter was fined thirty pounds' weight of tobacco for every day and night they were so harboured.

Any pursuit after runaway servants was made at the public expense. If the master would not pay the charges, the local authorities sold or hired out the servant, when captured, to recoup themselves.

Another regulation was that no minister should marry any servants unless he had a certificate from both masters that they fully consented. If he disregarded this prohibition, and performed the ceremony, he was liable to a penalty of ten thousand pounds' weight of tobacco.

Time went by, and at last, though very gradually, public opinion in America took a healthier and a higher tone. The condition of the Redemptioner and his fellow-sufferers began to be inquired into, and in some respects ameliorated. It was enacted in Maryland, in 1817, that there should be in future an official in every port to register the apprenticeship of servants, or the engagement of Redemptioners and other emigrants. Unless drawn up and secured by this official, no agreement was considered binding. Minors were not allowed to be sold, excepting by their parents or next of kin, an exception that seems odd, to say the least of it. Certainly,

the 'incurable' lads and lasses of those days must have been much more readily dealt with than they are at present. There is, in fact, a *cause célèbre* upon record in the year 1743, in which one James Annesley claimed the earldom of Anglesey from his uncle, who, he alleged, had caused him to be kidnapped and sold at thirteen years of age. He gained the case and the estates, but did not press for the title, a barren honour, which the uncle continued to hold until he died.

The new regulations were in the main beneficial, though they were, of course, often evaded in various ways, chiefly by bribing the Government official. Failing this, they were now and again openly broken through.

As with the later trade in negroes, the profits were too large for the traffic to be lightly relinquished, and it was not till the beginning of the present century that it eventually died out through the spread of free emigration.

Black slavery has always had its defenders, and no doubt white servitude was not less fortunate. Yet it seems amazing that such a state of things could ever have been permitted in a civilised country, and that custom and law, both in England and America, could ever have promoted and sanctioned the institution of the Redemptioners.

CURIOUS SHOWERS.

In August last year the inhabitants of Bjelina, in Bosnia, were treated to a rather unusual meteorological phenomenon in the shape of a shower of fish which accompanied a severe thunder-storm from the north-west. The strangest part of the occurrence was that the fish were alive and resembled whittings, and that they were caught in the gutters by the children, and brought in by wondering peasants from the fields, meadows, and high-roads. Possibly, had there been scarcity in the neighbourhood, this curious shower would have been hailed as a direct intervention of Providence on behalf of the inhabitants; but, as there seems to have been no distress, there is no knowing what they thought of it, though it goes without saying that they attributed it to any cause but a natural one. As a matter of fact, the visitation, though comparatively rare, is explicable on perfectly natural grounds. The fish were undoubtedly taken up into the air by a waterspout, carried along by atmospheric currents, and dropped, as it happened, over the village of Bjelina. They had not been held 'in suspension,' so to speak, for long, because the fish were alive when they fell to the ground.

But mere distance from a large expanse of water does not count, for these fish-showers are known to have occurred many hundreds of miles away from the nearest coast. In South America, some years ago, a tract of country forty-three miles square was found thick with fish; and—to omit a host of other such instances abroad—in England on at least one occasion some pasture-land a considerable distance from the sea was found strewn with bushels of small fishes. We know ourselves of a shower of fish-bones which

fell only last year in the heart of Wales. Such showers are frequent enough at sea, and every sailor can tell of their occurrence. Mariners can also tell of showers of dust, of small animals, or of plants falling upon their vessels thousands of miles out on the ocean. These are explained on much the same principle as the fish-showers on land, with the substitution of a sandspout for a waterspout.

Mud-showers and frog-showers, of which we hear rather frequently, are caused in the same way. M. Peltier has put a frog-shower on record as having happened within his own experience. He speaks of seeing the frogs fall on the roofs of the houses, and rebound from thence on to the pavement below. A mud-shower occurred along the Union Pacific Railway at Onaga on the 4th of April 1892. The rain, we are assured, commenced early in the day, and soon the south and east sides of all the houses were covered with yellow clay. A Union Pacific train which ran through the storm had its windows covered; and the headlight was so completely plastered that the light was shut in, and the train ran in darkness into Rossville, where the mud had to be scraped off. As far east as Topeka the windows showed that the edge of the mud-storm had extended this far. It is said to have been even more severe fifty miles north-west.

Blood rain and black rain are only varieties of this phenomenon. Of the latter, we hear nothing worth speaking of nowadays; but an almost historic shower of this sort fell at Montreal in the earlier part of this century, and enveloped the then youthful city in a black pall, which must have been worse than a prime London fog, seeing that it gave the inhabitants the idea that the last day had come, or was at least on the point of coming. 'Blood' rain is caused by the presence of infinitely little plants, animalcules, or minerals in the globules. In one instance of a shower that fell at Bristol and in the Bristol Channel, the analytical examination showed that the red colour was due to ivy-berry seeds. In medieval times, blood rain was a prodigy; in the East it was connected with the belief that man was produced from blood that fell from heaven.

It was a portent as remarkable as the 'bloody host,' which, while it flourished, probably caused the death of more Jews in this country than any other individual superstition directed against that people. It is described as 'an appearance of blood flowing from bread when bitten;' but it manifested itself in other articles of food besides bread, and sometimes seemed to drop from the air. It will be remembered by historical readers that while Alexander was besieging Tyre, this prodigy and the other one of 'blood rain' occurred in one day, much to the consternation of the soldiers.

More curious than blood rain in regard to the mere colour was the red, violet, and grass-green shower which fell in the south of France many years ago, and made a patchwork of the big lake, whereon its manifestation was the more noticeable. This shower, again, was caused by untold myriads of differently-coloured animalcules.

Spider-showers are another curiosity worthy of mention in this connection. The spiders are gossamers; and all those who have read White's

Natural History of Selborne will call to mind his description of the showers he observed. One of these, he tells us, continued for nearly a whole day, and the gossamers descended from a surprising height; for when one gentleman ascended a hill near at hand, some three hundred feet high, he found that the spiders were dropping from a region in the atmosphere that was still beyond the reach of his gaze. Dr Martin Lister named this aerial spider 'the bird,' from the facility with which it can traverse the air; and upon one occasion, when he observed a shower of them at York, he ascended to the top of the Minster, and found that even at that altitude he was still below their level—that they were descending from some region above that standpoint. Darwin, another observer of spider-showers, describes one which he saw in 1832, when on board the *Beagle*, at the mouth of the La Plata River, when the vessel was some sixty miles from land; and he seems to have been the first to notice that each parachute of gossamer carried a spider aeronaut, for he not only observed them arrive on board the ship, but he also saw them reproduce a new parachute, and on this frail bark launch forth again 'on the bosom of the palpitating air.'

These gossamer showers are great mysteries, and once seen, cannot very readily be forgotten; for the air on these occasions becomes literally crowded with the tiny parachutes mentioned, which are composed of a few threads of almost invisible gossamer, with a small but lively spider attached. This may be regarded as the most beautiful thing in strange showers.

The most marvellous, perhaps, is manifested in the way of hail-showers—that is, if we are to take for truth all we hear on this head. There is no reason in the world to doubt the assertion that hailstones, like rain, have been known to fall from a perfectly cloudless sky. But those of little faith may very well doubt the stories that have been told about the size of the stones themselves. Bluish hailstones weighing one hundred pounds each are said, by Count de Mezeray, to have fallen in Italy in the year 1510. Hailstones 'as big as a man's fist' are almost as common as potatoes. A storm that occurred in 1809 is said to have broken over two hundred thousand panes of glass in London alone; and in Hertfordshire, another storm is reported to have caused the death of several people. Blocks of ice weighing four and a half pounds fell at Cazorla, in Spain, on June 5, 1829; and in the south of France, in October 1844, other blocks fell which turned the scale at eleven pounds.

THE CHINESE BARBER.

THE services of the *teto-yen*, or Barber, are in constant request in China, and a much more extended and complicated process is gone through than is the case at our English hair-dresser's, whose operations are generally limited to hair-cutting and clean-shaving. Having settled his customer comfortably in his chair, the Chinese barber commences by scraping, not only the cheeks and chin of his victim, but also the whole of his head, with the exception of one spot

on the top of his cranium, from which sprouts the inevitable queue; this is called by the Chinese *pien-tsü*, and by us commonly pigtail, a name much resented by the Chinaman as a vulgar and insulting designation of the 'sacred lock.' Having succeeded in shaving carefully round the pigtail, leaving the head in a bright and shining condition, resembling a well-polished billiard ball, the barber begins to perform upon his customer in a manner which can only be adequately described as 'punching his head.' This is done by clenching his fist and dealing to the long-suffering patient several sharp taps or punches with the tips of his knuckles, varied by a process of kneading or pounding, the barber digging his knuckles into the ill-fated headpiece of his customer in a most merciless fashion, suggesting that the operator is some philanthropic but fanatical phrenologist who is seeking to improve the character of his subject by altering the undulations of his skull and changing the relative positions of his 'bumps.'

The reason for these eccentric actions on the part of the Celestial barber is that his customer finds—or imagines that he finds—his brain cleared and his mind relieved; worry, care, depression, and dullness dispersed, and a feeling of lightness, brightness, and vivacity induced. As he is probably just recovering from the depressing and enervating effects of an opium stupor, with its strange and dreamful delirium, this result is not undesirable if business has to be transacted, in which, by the way, the Chinaman usually displays quite as much shrewdness and ability as our own merchant or tradesman.

After the punching and pounding process is concluded, the barber at once proceeds to unfasten and unplat the long tail of hair, which reaches to the ankles of the wearer, and having combed, brushed, and begreased it—much after the fashion of the long-tressed maiden of to-day—he, with slow and assiduous carefulness, replaits it, and ties it with a piece of black braid which hangs in two short tails at the end.

By this time one would think that sheer exhaustion would prevent the pitiless and persecuting barber from committing further atrocities upon the person of his mild and lamb-like subject; but no; renewed activity possesses the ruthless, unrelenting hair-dresser, and with frantic energy he seizes the hands of his victim, pulls his arms behind, and commences to twist and turn them until every joint cracks, and one would think that his shoulders must be dislocated. The muscles of the arms are next the objects of attack, and the kneading and pounding process is again gone through, then the fingers are bent backwards, the finger-bones crack again, and all the tortures of the rack appear to be endured.

Thus the operations of the tonsorial artist are concluded, he is duly remunerated, and the Chinaman walks lightly out of the shop, feeling

himself refreshed and invigorated; the Englishman staring with undisguised astonishment at the discovery that life still lingers in the body of his Celestial brother.

THE RETURN OF TANĒ.

[These lines are based on the customs and superstitions of the Maoris, or aboriginal race of New Zealand. They placed great faith in their native priests, who professed to divine the future, and at times to communicate with the dead. The last verse refers to the Maori custom of leaving their dead upon some mountain which was so sacred as to render any intrusion fatal. Mt. Tarawera, the scene of the dreadful eruption of 1886, was one of those holy mountains of burial, the Maoris having carried their dead there for fifteen generations.]

At the set of the sun from the pa* of Maroa
Strode TanĒ the chief.

On the red-wrathful brow of him, TanĒ the Toa,†
Like a wind-shaken leaf
Shook the huia‡ feather.

'Ye have offered me shame. Like the puia's§ foun-
tain,

My soul surges o'er.
The pa of Maroa, the lake and the mountain
Shall know me no more
Till the earth meets the heavens !'

Loud murmured the people: 'Be eyes to our blindness,
Tuhotu the priest !
Shall TanĒ the loved one revisit in kindness,
When his anger has ceased,
The land of his fathers ?'

Tuhotu the aged, who speaks the dark meaning
Of shade-dwelling dead,
Looking over his staff as he totters in leaning,
Saith, bowing the head,
'He shall, and he shall not !'

Many a moon on the pa of Maroa
Has flitted away ;
And the multitude gathers, for TanĒ the Toa
Comes hither to-day,
And the breach is healed over.

But how cometh TanĒ ? Slow rowers are rowing.
O'er brown neck and breast
The red blood of mourning on sharp shell is flowing :
The dark word is guessed
Of the Seer Tuhotu.

He comes to Maroa. The tempest shall whiten
His bones on the hill—
The Mountain of Dread where the forked fires lighten
Profaners to kill—
But his soul is in Reinga.||

JESSIE MACKAY.

* Pa, a fortified Maori village.

† Toa, great chief.

‡ Huia, a New Zealand pigeon, whose feathers were worn by chiefs only.

§ Puia, New Zealand geyser.

|| Reinga, the Maori heaven.

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THREE FAMOUS ITALIAN BRIGANDS.

A SHORT time ago the news went abroad in Rome that in the district of Viterbo the brigand Ansuini had been captured. Surprised by a patrol of carabinieri, after a lively exchange of shots, Ansuini, dangerously wounded, had fallen into the hands of justice. Unfortunately, this news was not true. But outside of Rome many people may have asked: 'What! do brigands still exist in Italy? Are strangers right, then, when even nowadays they insert the classic episode of brigandage in the programme of a projected trip to Italy?' This romantic institution has really disappeared from Italian soil, with the exception that there still exists, and at a short distance from Rome, a species of brigandage; and perhaps it will not be unacceptable to some of your readers to hear a few particulars of the history of the three remaining Italian brigands.

Ansuini, Tiburzi, and Fioravanti are the names of the brigands actually in the exercise of their calling. The last remains of a famous race, their names enjoy in Latium and on the confines of Tuscany a certain renown and an undeniable popularity. A few years back, they had a numerous band of associates. Death and the galley have by degrees reduced their number. Domenico Tiburzi, the most formidable of the three, was a cowherd at Cellere. In 1872, at twenty-five years of age, he had his first differences with the law—a highway robbery, an extortion, and a murder. Taken and condemned to penal servitude for life, in January 1874 he escaped from the salt mines of Corneto Tarquina. From then until now he has remained at large, eluding all efforts to capture him. The forest was and is now his refuge, his kingdom; there, between Civita Vecchia and Grosseto, in the wide solitudes of the *macchia*, he has lived for twenty years, defying the spies and the rewards offered by the public authorities. To any one familiar with the nature of the *macchia* this is easily understood. The word *macchia* (scrub or bush)

is here applied to regions that are really so inaccessible as to be unexplored and utterly inexplorable, abounding in glens, ravines, and treacherous precipices, the ground covered by a dense scrubby growth, surrounded by extensive deserts, where the wild horses gallop in freedom, and the malaria reigns supreme. The brigand who knows every corner of the *macchia* lives as securely as in an unknown island surrounded by the ocean. How many times has he seen from afar the glitter of the bayonets! How many times have the carabinieri passed, grazing the hedge where he was lying curled up! How many times, disguised and unrecognisable, has he descended into the village, and even into Rome itself, perhaps to enjoy a little variety and buy some powder and balls!

Tiburzi, strong in his refuge and in his terrible fame, which he takes good care every now and then to renew, lives—permit the expression—as a man of honour. He does not rob; he does not steal; he does not harm any one. He levies taxes after his own fashion. The wealthy of the neighbouring districts pay him every month a fixed contribution: money, wine, bread, weapons, and tobacco. In recompense he guarantees the safety both of their lives and of their property: in short, he acts as a kind of public guardian for them in the *macchia*. The relations between the brigand and the people are of a most friendly description. The poor when destitute of food come to Tiburzi; he also gives them coin, with which he is always well provided. Do not imagine that such amicable relations exist only with the poor and uneducated country-people. It is the rich landowners who pay most willingly the tax which brings them an entire security for their rural property. But woe to the spy! Sooner or later, be it from afar or near, the terrible hand of the brigand strikes him; and an atrocious vengeance rouses the authorities, and convinces the unbelievers of the existence of the legendary brigand. In this way Tiburzi lives. Seventeen different warrants hang over him; but, excepting the first crimes, the others are all for

acts of vengeance against supposed or dreaded spies.

In these eighteen years of hiding from justice, Tiburzi had several companions; but, less skilful or less fortunate than he, they have all perished. The last were Domenico Biagini and Luciano Fioravanti. In 1889, on the 6th of August, the three together were surprised by the carabinieri; a sharp fight ensued: Biagini fell dead. The other two succeeded in escaping into the unknown parts of the *macchia*, where they disappeared like spectres. They disappeared, but vowing vengeance. They believed the spy was a certain Raphael Gabrielli, land-steward to the Marquis Guglielmo, although the carabinieri have since declared it was not true. A year after, in June 1890, Gabrielli was overlooking the working of fifty reapers on the Guglielmo estate at Pozzatelli, about three miles from the Montalbo Orbetello. At eight o'clock in the morning the reapers stopped for a few minutes to take rest and food. Two armed men suddenly issued forth from the side of the morass which bordered on the estate. One of them advanced to Gabrielli, and said to him: 'Get up and come with us.' The latter refused. The speaker seized him, and dragged him a few steps to where his companion stood ready with the pointed gun. Before that entire company of fifty persons, powerless and terrified, was the horrible deed perpetrated. 'Remember the 6th of August,' cried the avenger, as he fired two shots into the unfortunate man's brain. Tiburzi and Fioravanti reloaded their weapons, and crying, 'In this way spies are treated,' disappeared again into the morass.

Ansuini, the chief of another band of brigands, was born at Norcia, and is about forty-seven years of age. He worked first as a mason, and then as a chairmaker. He served in the 28th infantry regiment; and at the assizes of Spoleto, in 1875, he was condemned to ten years' imprisonment for theft. He underwent his term at Lecco and at Pianosa. Returning to his native district in 1885, he was, the following year, again before the assizes of Spoleto, charged with murder and highway robbery. He was condemned to death, the capital sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life, and he was transported to the penal settlement of Monte Filippo. On the night of the 9th or 10th of April 1890 he escaped in company with three other felons. At first they scoured the adjacent country, depredating, robbing, and committing numerous highway aggressions. Then, having lost in various conflicts two of his comrades, he succeeded—along with Giovanni Menichetti—in gaining his native territory, a district somewhere between Viterbo and Norcia. These two men became the terror of the country.

Ansuini is a man of medium stature, of a slight build, with chestnut hair and mild blue eyes. He can both read and write. When in prison, he was apathetic, but always exemplary in his conduct. He is not a ferocious man, such as brigands are popularly pictured; but he is instead as cunning as a fox. The escape from the settlement was due to his astuteness; the turnkeys say it was a real masterpiece of cunning. His was the head that planned; Menichetti's, the arm that executed. Menichetti, whom report paints as having been a man of a violent and

sanguinary disposition, was killed in June 1891, in the morass of San Magno, during an encounter in which also a brave brigadier of carabinieri lost his life. From that time Ansuini has lived alone. He also, like Tiburzi, organised a system of taxation, only that in his case the tax is voluntary; in other words, Ansuini, being a native of the place, always finds some one ready to supply him with food; and in case of danger, to give him a secure hiding-place. He, too, is implacable against spies.

Ansuini and Menichetti one time had plotted against a priest named Onesti of Viterbo. The plot failed, because Onesti, warned in time, was able to save himself. The bandits imagined that a certain Pasquale Signorelli had betrayed them. Shortly after, Signorelli disappeared, and his poor wife received a letter, signed by Ansuini, demanding two thousand francs for the ransom of her husband. The woman obeyed; but no one came to claim the desired sum, and Signorelli did not reappear. Three months after, on the margin of the morass, his unburied body was found. Ansuini had left a written statement to the effect that, having punished the traitor as he merited, he had no need of his money!

Besides these three principal brigands, in the last few years there have been others of minor importance, but fortunately they have been destroyed. The greatest contingent is always furnished by the escapes from prison; and it is easy to understand the reason why. But it is difficult to understand why these escapes are repeated so often, and above all, why prisoners are kept in the prisons of their own districts, instead of sending them to fulfil their sentences in others far distant, where it would be more difficult to escape; and even if they escaped, it would be impossible to evade pursuit. A short time since, five men succeeded in escaping almost miraculously from the works of the fort of Monte Mario. They all, except one, fell into the hands of justice, miserable, ragged, and dying with hunger, precisely because they were natives of other districts, and could not obtain any assistance from the people of the neighbourhood.

Heavy rewards are offered for the capture of the three principal brigands: ten thousand francs for whoever will deliver up Tiburzi; four thousand for Fioravanti; seven thousand for Ansuini. However, owing to the nature of the place and the peculiar system of brigandage practised up to the present time, all the efforts of the authorities have been in vain.

Many strange tales are told in connection with the adventures of these outlawed men. One day, it is narrated, a gentleman, one of the so-called tax-payers to Tiburzi, met him in the country. After the usual greetings, Tiburzi said to him: 'Oh! by the way, do you know that Spadini [the well-known Roman gunsmith] has a magnificent English repeating rifle: be kind enough to buy it for me.' The gentleman instantly promised to do so, but never thought more of the rifle or of Tiburzi, until, some considerable time after, he again encountered the latter. The thought of his forgotten promise suddenly flashed across his mind. In some trepidation, he was beginning to excuse his shortcoming, when the brigand affably anticipated him. 'Don't trouble yourself; I have already got

the gun,' he said, pointing to the weapon on his shoulder.

Another time, a company of hunters halted in a retired part of Viterbo. Whilst the supper was being prepared, a handsome man of distinguished mien came forward, and greeting the landlord, seated himself at the common table: he ate, drank, and took part in the general conversation, relating himself many spirited stories of the chase. He accompanied the hunters for a considerable distance on their way, and finally politely took leave of them. 'Who is that fine fellow?' one of the party asked the landlord. 'That is the famous Tiburzi the brigand!' he replied.

Thousands of anecdotes of this nature could be told. Contrary to the belief held by the majority of English people, the authorities, and especially the carabinieri, spare neither trouble nor risks to catch the offenders; but perhaps the proper men and the right means are not always adopted. Once, a dozen carabinieri were sent into a certain part of the country, all provided with new clothes and hats precisely similar, which ingenious disguise of course betrayed them a hundred yards off. Half an hour after their arrival, everybody in the country knew that the strangers were police in disguise. Another time, a well-known officer sent to take one of these brigands was furnished with the magnificent sum of four pounds to spend in lavish liberality!

Notwithstanding these facts, it is satisfactory to note that the conditions of public security are in a much better state than they were some years ago.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER I.

But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges and schools,
That when nae real ills perplex them,
They make enow themselves to vex them.

BURNS.

'I DON'T really see,' Dr Merridew said, scratching his head thoughtfully—'I don't really see how it is to be done this year, Sage. To be sure, there's been a lot of illness, and every one says the doctors ought to be making their fortunes; but, in my experience, it's always the poor people who are ill and require my services, while the rich go to a specialist. And then lodgings are so very expensive at this time of year, and the boys eat such quantities, bless them! at the seaside.—It is a remarkable thing,' went on the doctor, 'that just in the one point in which I could supply my family gratis—that is, medical advice—they never avail themselves of the opportunity; nor do they ever require drugs, which I could get at reasonable prices. I wouldn't mind betting, now, that bakers' children don't consume a quarter the amount of bread mine do; and butchers' families, on the same principle, are vegetarian. Such is the perversity of human nature! I think this year that, instead of going away from London, I will make up a few bottles of tonic, and they can have Tidman's Sea Salt.

Sage, who was used to her father's tirades when

holiday-time drew near, only sighed sympathetically, and went on darning a pair of serge knickerbockers that would be quite good enough to wear on the beach. There was so much of that sort of thing to be thought of before the annual exodus from London. If she had not been such a contented, happy, little soul, she might have wondered sometimes if the enjoyment was worth the bother. Even Dr Merridew himself did not fully appreciate how much was demanded at these times of Sage's wise, young head and busy, little hands. He thought, after the manner of men-folk, that when he had provided the sinews of war, which, joking apart, was not by any means an easy matter, there was nothing more to be done except just to pack up their traps and be off; and he did not recognise what a difficult operation that was with four happy, healthy creatures between six and twelve, who seemed to have a special talent for wearing out knees of stockings, seats of knickerbockers, and elbows of jackets.

It was not so very long ago that Sage herself had been one of these irresponsible beings, and sometimes, I am afraid, she had thought mother unnecessarily fussy, and too much absorbed in the mending up of sea-side clothing and the packing of boxes. Sage had small arrangements of her own then that seemed to her of infinitely greater importance than sand-shoes and jerseys. Her colour-box had to be reviewed, which in moments of reckless generosity she would sometimes lend to the boys to beguile a wet afternoon or tedious recovery from a cold—a generosity which she bitterly rued when the box was returned to her in a chaotic condition. Amidst all the manifold preparations, mother always found time to remember that colour-box, and reward the girl, for somewhat unwilling help over the mending-basket, with a hardly-spared coin from her purse, and with half an hour to run off to the big artist's colour-shop, which at that time contained everything that Sage thought worth living for at that period.

Sage often tried to persuade mother to save the money expended on the serge frock and neat, little sailor hat, which were always provided for Sage herself, and let her spend it on those brushes or sketch-book or paints, that were so much better worth having; and perhaps if Sage had been Mrs Merridew's own little daughter, she might have been persuaded to let the school frock or anything do; but fond of her as she was—and no mother could have been fonder—there was still that lurking feeling that people might think she let her step-daughter go shabbier than her own, which prevented her yielding to the girl's wishes.

Among all the stock characters of fiction, I think the bad step-mother is the one least often found in real life; and certainly Sage's experience was not exceptional, and it was only by extra fondness and preference shown to her that any difference was to be seen. Perhaps it was that kindness which it has been so truly said we do not show to those we really love. There is no feeling of kindness to those we love very much; when the love is less, the need of kindness comes in: a mother is never *kind* to her child, a step-mother is.

And so Mrs Merridew was very kind to Sage—

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so kind, that the motherless girl never felt for a moment the want of a mother; she never remembered or wished for anything better than the kindness that was so near akin to a mother's love. But when Sage was only fifteen, Mrs Merridew died, and then the time of kindness and tender consideration came to an end, and Sage herself stepped into the mother's place, and had to think and care for others, and put herself and her poor little paint-box quite out of sight. She had had dreams before that of an artistic life, having certainly a facility with pencil and brush that might have been called considerable talent in more appreciative circumstances. But father was too busy, and too much disposed to depreciate himself and all his belongings in a half-joking way; and mother, dear and kind as she was, and considerate, as we have said, in regard to filling the paint-box, knew nothing at all of such things, and was inclined to look as admiringly on Kitty's rudimentary ideas of a pig, a square object with a ringlet at one end and a nob at the other; or on Will's never-ending trains with much smeared smoke, applied with the end of the finger, as on Sage's more ambitious performances.

But when mother died, darning and cutting bread and butter seemed somehow to fill the place of drawing, and small household cares to blot out day-dreams.

If Sage had been ten years older, she would have been overwhelmed with the responsibility of her position; but at fifteen there is a blessed elasticity and power of recovery that every year lessens; and though she might shed a few hot tears over account-books that would not add up right, or lie awake for a few minutes, hot and indignant, over some piece of impertinence from the servants, or imagine dreadful possibilities when the boys were late in coming home from school, the intensity of such feelings did not last long and rankle, as it would have done in later years; the tears could be dried, and the account-books laid aside and forgotten; the indignation was slept away, and did not seem half so bad next morning; and nothing ever really happened to the boys.

Then, too, father was a very reassuring court of final appeal, though she sometimes wished he would take things more seriously.

'Won't come right, eh?' he would say; 'nor do my accounts ever. I never could make two and two come to four. Why should they? I daresay they don't in the planet Mars.—How much have you got left? That's the most important thing to find out. It's a mercy I have not to send in bills with all the items, or I should not have a patient left when they discovered the weakness of my addition.—One-and-fourpence-halfpenny wrong? Phew!—a long whistle—that's serious. I think putting it down as 'sundries' is demoralising; suppose we put it down as lost, in rather large letters. There is a virtuous feeling when one has confessed one's misdoings, and they are writ large.'

Then, again, about Mary Jane's misdemeanours; he was more amused than offended at her declaring as she weren't a 'eathen slave to clean two pair of master's boots in a day, as were that wore out as no gent didn't ought to wear them; and the last place as she was at the master wore

patent leathers and new constant—he *were* a gentleman. 'They are old,' he said, holding up one foot reflectively. 'Mary Jane is quite right. But they are desperately comfortable. I am not sure that I ever had a pair of patent leathers; only don't tell Mary Jane, or I might sink still lower in her estimation.'

Then, as regards anxiety over the boys, he used to laugh at Sage's grave little face, and tell her that when she had been married twice and had known what real trouble was, she would not be so inclined to forestall it by imagining what might never come to pass.

'You were the only one I was ever really anxious about, little wisdom. I had a fearful attack of indigestion when you were cutting your teeth. Nothing affects the digestion as badly as anxiety, and I developed distinct symptoms of heart disease when you had the measles, from pure agitation. It is mostly people who have no cause for anxiety who are the most anxious. The most easy-going, happy-go-lucky people are those who live on a volcano that may overwhelm them at any moment. If you come to think of it, what a silly thing anxiety is! There is no end to it, if you once begin. Only think of all the perils that surround us every time we go out, leave alone those we keep at home—infection from any one you rub shoulders with in the street, from every cab or 'bus or railway carriage—a falling chimney-pot, a runaway horse, a mad dog, even a bit of orange peel on the pavement, besides all the murderers and lunatics at large. Dear heart! one might live in a room of horrors all the time if one had the mind, without paying the extra sixpence at Madame Tussaud's.'

But at the time this story begins, Sage had had five years of housekeeping, and had attained the advanced age of twenty, and regarded herself as a very experienced person, and was so regarded also by the boys. Dr Merridew from the very first had deferred entirely to Sage, and had insisted on the boys doing the same; whatever she decided on was to be done, though sometimes his eyes would twinkle a little as he elaborately carried out a programme that was manifestly not the wisest. But this system had a very beneficial effect both as regards Sage and the boys, making her less positive and dictatorial, and them less disposed to set up their will against hers.

During these five years Sage had grown used to Dr Merridew's declaring every year the impossibility of affording a summer-holiday change, which nevertheless came to pass as regularly as the boys' holidays began; so this year she was not surprised to find, at the end of a tirade on the subject, that he had heard of a fishing village on the Dorsetshire coast which a friend of his had visited while on a walking tour, and that he had already written to ask if lodgings were to be had there.

CHAPTER II.

So, by Atlantic breezes fanned,
You roam the limits of the land,
And I in London's world abide,
Poor flotsam on the human tide.

W. WATSON.

'It's ripping!' Dennis announced authoritatively from the box as the overladen fly laboured up

the hill and came in sight of Scar, just a cluster of thatched cottages, with yellow-washed walls, and overhanging eaves, and little wooden porches, and deep-set lattice windows, standing irregularly on either side of a steep, little village street, running down to a cleft in the cliffs, whence a steep path leads to the beach below. There were red-sailed fishing-boats drawn up on the beach; and, beyond, a wide stretch of beautiful blue dancing sea.

Dennis had had dark misgivings that Scar would prove to be one of those stuck-up fashionable places where people dressed up and walked up and down to a band; but these fears were dissipated by the first sight of the rough, little street, and the group of fishermen at the top of the path to the beach, spreading out a net to dry on the wall, while two boys were bringing up a basket heaped with beautiful shining blue and green and silver mackerel.

That first sight of Scar reassured Sage, too, of her doubts of its being worth the trouble, which this year had seemed greater than ever, the boxes being more decrepit, the family clothes less calculated for hard sea-side wear, the servants more tiresome and untrustworthy, and Dr Merri-dew himself not very well, but making light of his ailments, as he always did, and calling his headache the result of over-eating, and his weariness laziness.

'If I could only stop with you!' Sage had said regretfully that last evening. 'I shan't enjoy it a bit while you are slaving away in London; and I know you don't really think you can get away to come down even for a Sunday. I do think people might not be ill on Sundays always, or Christmas Day, or just when you most want a holiday!'

'It would be a bad job,' said Dr Merri-dew wearily, 'if people were never ill when I feel inclined for a holiday!—a bad job for our bread and butter, I mean, whatever it might be for the public at large. But when my ship comes in, and we are not obliged to think of such vulgar things as bread and butter, but have turtle soup and champagne without even ringing the bell, then you and I, Sage, will go off together for a long holiday. Where shall we go? Somewhere sunny and bright and quiet.'

'Italy,' said Sage, with great eyes fixed on this wonderful, impossible future.

'Too far,' said Dr Merri-dew. 'What do you say to Hampstead?—There,' he added, 'that is just how your mother looked when I said something provoking, and pulled up our day-dreams short.'

It was only when Dr Merri-dew was tired or out of sorts that he talked to Sage of her mother and the short romance of his life, which twenty years of hard practical work, and a happy but very unromantic second marriage, had by no means blotted from his heart and tender memory.

'She was younger than you are now, Sage, and I was little more than a boy. When I see the wise and prudent young people of the present day who can't afford to marry, and who put what they call their love—save the mark!—to cool on a shelf while they are waiting for means to provide a fitting establishment for the poor delicate thing, I sometimes wonder if it can be the same sort of feeling that carried me and Olive

right through and over all obstacles straight into Elysium. Not that I advocate imprudent marriages; don't so misunderstand me, Sage; I should be the last to advocate such, who see so much of the misery that usually ensues; but I am bound to confess that my case was an exception; and neither Olive nor I ever regretted what we had done for a moment, though it cost us all our friends, and her all that women as a rule care for—position and fashion and a society life. But it was very short, little Sage—only a year. But if life went on for a hundred years, all pain and grief and work and weariness, which, thank Heaven! it's not or anything like it, I would gladly live it out for the sake of that one year.'

And then, when Sage was worked up to romantic enthusiasm, with bright eyes and flushed cheeks, he would say something painfully matter of fact—propose tripe for supper, or declare he had a flea hopping about him, and perform all sorts of grotesque wriggings and gymnastics, which made her laugh in spite of herself. But she was very loth to leave him this year; and she went away convinced that she should not enjoy herself a bit, and—the weather being hot and sultry, and the train crowded, and the children fidgety—she actually arrived at Shingle, the nearest station to Scar, with a headache, an almost unheard-of complaint, happily, in that noisy household at Dalston, and with such a white little face, that a gentleman offered to help her to carry some of the multitudinous parcels that had been added one by one to supplement the luggage, as various forgotten and indispensable articles turned up at the last moment.

'We'll carry it, Sage. Do let us take it—it will be so jolly useful on the beach.—Look here—Nigel hasn't anything to carry except his boat and the cricket things; he'll manage it.'

And so he did for the first ten minutes; but after that it was: 'Here, Sage, just lay hold of this for a minute while I get my knife out.'

And of course, when Shingle was reached, the whole party forgot everything but the fact of arrival, and pelted out of the train, leaving Sage to struggle with the various impedimenta.

'Oh, thank you,' Sage said to the gentleman who offered his help; 'don't trouble. The boys will carry the things.—Here, Dennis, Nigel, Will—come back directly!'

And the gentleman raised his hat and passed on with a smile at the unruly crew under the command of such a small, white, and yet determined little captain. He was a middle-aged man, with a kind, attentive face, that seemed to notice and be interested in everything, and with that particular cut, or want of cut, in his gray hair that betrays the artist; and when the fly passed him on the road between Shingle and Scar, the flyman touched his hat to him, and told Dennis that it was a painting gentleman, 'as lived up to Scar Cliff Farm and made pitch-ters.'

That first sight of Scar that removed Dennis's misgivings as to its being a fashionable place, also took away Sage's headache, and any doubts of its being worth the trouble, and the feeling of its being quite impossible to really enjoy anything without father.

'Don't worry your little head about me,' he

had said. 'Go away and enjoy yourself; and come back burnt as red as a lobster, if you want to be a comfort to your afflicted parent.'

She had shaken her head dolefully, feeling that loyalty demanded constant anxiety and harrowing thought; but that first sight of Scar, or perhaps it was that first breath of sea-air blowing up from that great stretch of sun-bright sea, with the refreshing smell of seaweed from the rocks left bare by the low tide, that swept away headache and anxiety; and she felt quite ashamed when she went to bed at night to remember how little she had thought of father all the evening. 'But I think he would rather I was happy.'

Scar is almost entirely inhabited by fishermen and lace-makers, many houses combining the industries, as might be known by a lobster pot at the door and a lace pillow with its bobbins in the window. Down one side of the village street ran a brisk little stream, bridged here and there by big slabs of slate; and a day or two of rain swelled it to quite a little torrent, which went rushing and tumbling down its stony bed, sweeping away the refuse of fish and cabbage stalks, which had a tendency to accumulate there in dry weather, until some public-spirited person turned to with a broom to clear the channel.

The lodgings engaged for the Merridews were about half-way down the street, and belonged to a widow, Mrs Rockett, the proprietor of the 'Black Dog,' the one little public-house of the place, opposite which modest hostelry the house was situated. The delight of the children knew no bounds when they found they were to have a regular fisherman's cottage all to themselves, with a kitchen with blue walls and a flagged floor, into which the door opened straight from the street; and with an open fireplace with a hook on which to hang the kettle; and a patchwork curtain to keep the smoke from blowing out into the room; and a black wooden settle; and a dresser, with plates and dishes of varying pattern and design displayed on it.

Behind this there was a little washhouse, out of which a very steep staircase led into the two bedrooms, whose principal furniture was two large four-post bedsteads without curtains. Washing was evidently intended to be done entirely down-stairs in the washhouse, as there was no provision made for it in the bedrooms; but Mrs Rockett prided herself on having provided elegant toilet arrangements for the young lady by having placed a very small looking-glass in the deep window of the front bedroom, with a crochet anti-macassar tastefully festooned over it.

'Mrs Rockett she know what the quality like, she do!' the admiring neighbours declared.

Mrs Rockett was a tall, stout woman, requiring a very long tape to fasten her apron where her waist was supposed to be, and with an unexpectedly soft and high voice, and a tendency to shed tears. In spite, however, of her mild manner and sentimental way of talking, she had managed to make her way as 'a widder woman left with six little steps sudden like, through her poor, dear, 'usban' missing his way on the cliff after Shingle Fair, having maybe took a drop, though temprate in his 'abits most times.'

She had kept the 'Black Dog' respectable, though it bore a bad name in old days, and Scar men were reckoned quarrelsome in their cups.

She kept a couple of cows now, and owned some of the rough cliff pasturage, and made a good deal by selling out milk—which was a luxury unknown at Scar in old times—and sending butter and cream to the Shingle market in the season. She owned, too, as I have said, the cottage opposite; and as it was empty through the death of old Joe Gash, and as his son 'as were mate on a merchantman trading with the Injies, and weren't like to be home afore Michaelmas,' Mrs Rockett placed it at the disposal of the Merridew family, supplementing old Joe's furniture with additions from her own stores, and buying one or two things from a sale at Shingle; altogether producing what to her and the neighbours appeared a very elegant effect, though she modestly apologised to Sage on her arrival for the roughness of everything, 'as ain't what you're used to, Missy, and knows myself what gentlefolks 'abits is, through having lived general, before I married my poor dear 'usban', at Mr Thompkins the draper up to Coriton; and a good master he were, though hot-tempered; and a wife as never knew what a day's 'ealth was.'

Mrs Rockett was so very discursive in her conversation, that it is difficult to record any of her utterances without being led away from the subject in hand; and that first evening, the boys thought she was never going to leave them to the enjoyment of the plentiful meal spread out on old Joe's little round table, that tipped if you rested your elbows on the edge, and led to plentiful up-settings of tea, till the peculiarity was recognised and humoured. Another table was required to accommodate the party; so another, standing considerably higher, was pulled up alongside, and both covered with the same cloth, and covered with plates of various sizes and patterns and black-handled knives and steel forks and tea-things, and a mighty tin teapot, and such a dish of lobsters as no one had ever seen, even in the big fishmonger's in the City; and a great crusty loaf; and a roll of butter that made Sage's housekeeping hair stand on end at the notion of the boys helping themselves from such an unlimited supply.

'It is just perfect here,' she wrote to Dr Merridew that evening to announce their safe arrival; 'and butter is only tenpence a pound.'

(To be continued.)

NATURE'S SANITARY AGENTS.

It is Keats who speaks of the river performing its

Priest-like task

Of pure ablution round earth's human shores.

The authors of 'The Moon'—Nasmyth and Carpenter—claim that luminary also as a scavenger for the earth. Were it not for its aid, they point out, the estuaries of our rivers would become stagnant centres of corruption. Nature's scavengers, indeed, are many, and their work interesting. Not only are physical agents, such as the foregoing and others, enlisted in the work, but organic beings, plants and animals, likewise take their share in the work of preserving the purity and health of the world. The three

agents, wind, water, and fire, are constantly at work purifying the world we live in. A hurricane, bringing destruction in its train, may yet bestow the blessing of an atmosphere purified from disease germs. Wind lifts the stagnating effluvia from the swamp, and by attenuation and oxidation deprives it of its destructive powers; the ozone-laden breeze from the ocean brings health on its wings. It is the wind, again, which gives to the ocean a part of that motion which helps to preserve its own purity and make it a purifying agency. Without motion, water is powerless; the stagnant pool is a centre of corruption. The greater motion of the ocean is due to the influence of the moon, and thus the Queen of Night becomes a cleanser of the earth as well as a lamp to lighten it in the absence of the sun.

And as the purifying effect of the tides can be traced to the moon, so that of rains and rivers may be traced to the sun. It is the sun which gives the energy to the falling raindrop and the flowing stream. By its influence, water—in the form of invisible vapour—is drawn up everywhere from land and ocean. Thus elevated, it is in a position to do work, like the raised weight of the pile-driver or a wound-up watch—it is said to have potential energy. It falls down to the earth, and collecting from the higher parts, flows down to the lowest—the ocean—in obedience to that mysterious law by which every particle in the universe attracts every other particle. Thus the dust is washed out of the atmosphere, and the refuse swept up from the surface of the earth. And the water thus poured down from the clouds to wash the earth is water in its purest form. When the chemist wishes to obtain pure water for scientific purposes, he distils it. The sun and the cold upper regions of the atmosphere form together a great apparatus for distilling the water to be used in washing the earth. Water thus set in circulation by the sun, kept in motion by wind, gravity, and lunar attraction, is our great purifier: water has become the symbol of purification.

And there is no more effective sanitary agent than fire. The ancient who made his napkin of asbestos had but to throw it into the fire when soiled, and it could not be made cleaner. And could we but build our houses of incombustible materials, the spring cleaning might be efficiently accomplished by incendiarism. London, indeed, was purified from a plague by a general conflagration. And almost the one thing which that nearly indestructible disease germ, the bacillus, cannot stand is heat.

But if heat is a great purifier, cold is no less a preserver from decay. Amid the eternal snows of the Arctic regions, the unburied carcase may lie fresh and uncorrupt for months; the flesh of the mammoth, buried in the frozen soil of Siberia, has resisted decay for untold centuries. And here, perhaps, we have one of 'nature's hints to inventors;' for meat is now largely preserved by freezing.

Electricity is also a sanitary agent. When Professor Tyndall was experimenting with atmospheric dust in his classical researches on the origin of the lowest forms of life, he found that

an electric discharge passed through a dusty atmosphere purified it, by causing the minute particles to settle. And long before these researches, it was commonly said, and believed, that a thunder-storm purified the air. Thus a scientific foundation is found for the popular belief, and the lightning flash takes its place as an accredited sanitary agent.

It was, moreover, established by the above experiments that the germs of decay, of mould, and of fermentation, are in the atmospheric dust, and that if these are kept out by a filter of cotton-wool, an organic infusion may be kept intact. Such a filter, then, to sift out the germs becomes an important agent in preserving from decay. And the above discovery, that decay depends on pre-existing germs, opens out wide fields of research in preventive methods in general science and surgery which cannot be touched upon here.

When we come to organic life, we find that almost every great division of the animal kingdom allots to some of its members the task of purification. The jackal follows the lion, and clears away the offal left by the lordly and disdainful appetite of the king of beasts ere the relics of his meal can become offensive. A taste for 'high' game is not confined to man: the wolf will disinter the buried corpse. And the partiality of rats for sewers is well known. The lofty-soaring vulture spies from afar the carcase in the desert, and ere there is time for decay, it is devoured. The carrion-crow gets its name from its carcase-eating propensities.

Fish, again, are voracious feeders, and not fastidious. In the river, the eel devours the rotting carcase; the dace seems to live by choice where the sewer enters the stream, doubtless for the sake of the diet. Among the molluscs, the carrion-eating stromb and the whelk prey on the dead bodies of fish. The garden slug is not averse to a semi-decayed leaf, and may even be seen at times to feed on a dead earthworm.

Among insects, flies and beetles may be specially mentioned. The fly lays its eggs in meat, and the young devour the rotten mass; others feed on dung. Beetles lay their eggs on the dunghill, or laboriously roll up balls of dung in which to place them; in both cases the young feed on the dung.

As an example of sanitary precautions taken for their own sake, may be mentioned the case of the bees, which cover up with wax an offensive body which cannot be removed from the hive. The great sub-kingdom to which insects belong—the Annulosa—supplies other scavengers. The earthworm feeds on decaying leaves; many crabs feed on carrion.

Thus it appears that the function of a considerable portion of the animal kingdom is, like a party of scavengers, to scour the streets and lanes of the organic world in search of the refuse and offal of the great living community; and to find, moreover, their pleasure and their reward in the work.

The great function of plants in this part of the economy of nature is to absorb the poison, in the shape of carbonic acid gas, breathed forth by animal life. Decomposing this within their tissues, they return to the atmosphere the oxygen so necessary to animal life. Decaying animal

and vegetable matter in the soil is likewise removed by them.

Thus, while one aspect of nature is that of universal change and decay, the other is that of universal restoration and purification. Wind, water, fire, electricity, and organic nature, combine to sweep, cleanse, and make pure and sweet the house we live in. But while nature thus provides for the continual purifying of his abode, the task of keeping himself clean is left to man. Hence the necessity of the frequent reiteration of that time-honoured proverb, 'Cleanliness is next to godliness,' which, perhaps, ought rather to be written, 'Cleanliness is a part of godliness.' And yet, if nature does not compel cleanliness by forcibly washing her refractory children, as she does the house they live in, she both warns and invites. It is written in plain letters which all may read that cleanliness is health and life, and that dirt is disease and death; while the flowing river and the sparkling sea both invite us to enjoy 'the purest exercise of health.' And this natural law shines forth in letters of fire as one of the fundamental truths in the spiritual world.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXV.—'HE THAT *will* BE RICH!'
(continued).

BUT there were reasons why George did not wish cheque-books and accounts and such-like trifles to be gone into then; he therefore proposed to his father that the serious business of lunch should be entertained first, since nothing of any consequence could be done before the luncheon hour must strike. His father looked at his watch, considered that he was hungry, and not at all aware that the fate of his house might be involved in his decision, he said: 'Very well. Let it be lunch first.'

George knew his father's good-nature and his affection for himself, and he set himself to interest and amuse him with other matters than those upon which they had trenched. His father had told him that he wished to get back to town that night, so that his mother might not be unduly anxious; and he was resolved that his father should go without seeing any books. He kept him as long as he could over lunch, and entertained him as richly as the elder would permit, and when he could keep him no longer, he made a bold proposal.

'You'll only tire yourself out, dad, before your journey, if you go into these things. Why not let me go through everything by myself? One person can do a thing like that better than two.'

'The second can check the first, my lad,' said his father.

'But the first can check himself,' said George, 'by going over it a second time.'

'Well, well, my lad,' said Suffield. 'Be it as thou wilt. But check thyself carefully, and let me know th' result by to-night's post. And these speculations o' thine—let me ha' a statement o' them as soon as tha conveniently can this week.'

Mr Suffield was not so foolish as to be deceived by his son's concern for his comfort: he saw there was something the young man would rather keep from him at present, and being a soft-hearted father, he was sorry for his son, and said to himself: 'I won't be hard on th' lad. He's my only son, and if he has made a mistake he shall have the chance of putting it right before he explains.' He had intended to return to London by the 'dining' train, but finding he could catch a train immediately, he went straightway to the station, while George returned to the office.

George set to work with energy to go through his accounts and to examine his private cheque-book—the only one to which, he thought, Daniel could have access—and tick off every cheque by the banker's passbook. He wrote to his father that night that he could not discover that Daniel had stolen anything but the plans.

Still George was uneasy, and he went about with his brows wrapped in anxiety; for he knew that his speculations in cotton, though only of a kind which he himself would call 'daring,' would probably be characterised by his father as 'reckless,' unless they were justified by their event; and their event was not yet; moreover, Gorgonio—with whom he had been the day before—was in low spirits, for prices were hanging at a very uninspiring level. But the first thing that seriously disturbed and shook him was the discovery that Tanderjee—to whom he had sent round an inquiry concerning Daniel—was 'gone away on business': his partner and compatriot could not say where! Where was the Parsee gone?—and why? He could not help thinking that his absence and Daniel's disappearance were more than a coincidence. The second disturbing thing was a piece of news that shook him like the blast of doom: it came from Gorgonio, and Gorgonio had thought it of sufficient importance to send it by a special messenger.—The steamer *Rohilla* had arrived in dock from Bombay with half that consignment of cotton on which Mr Suffield had last given Tanderjee a substantial advance; and Gorgonio and this messenger of his had gone and examined the cotton together—bale after bale—and Gorgonio regretted much to say that the cotton was rubbish!—and would not fetch two-pence a pound!—Would Mr Suffield come and see it?

'Have you seen the cotton?' asked George of the messenger.

'Yes, sir,' answered the clerk.

'And you agree with Mr Gorgonio?'

'Quite, sir.'

'And of course you have been in the habit of sampling cotton?'

'For years, sir.'

'Then,' said George, 'I don't see why I should waste precious time at present in going to the Liverpool docks to look at it. Mr Gorgonio can look after it: perhaps it will prove not to be all so bad when it is fully examined.—Has Mr Gorgonio,' he asked suddenly, 'seen anything of Mr Tanderjee lately?'

'I don't know, sir,' answered the clerk.

'You don't know, then, that he has gone away nobody knows where?'

'Has he indeed, sir? That looks bad.'

'Why does that look bad?' demanded George.

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'Because this is the cotton just arrived that you favoured him with an advance for, sir; and I heard Mr Gorgonio say to-day that Mr Tanderjee would make a good thing out of it.'

'Then,' said George, 'your master suspects that Tanderjee may have gone away?'

'Very likely he does, sir.'

The native activity and pugnacity of George's character were becoming thoroughly roused. To suspect was to be resolved. He blew through the tube by his writing-table, and a clerk appeared from the outer office. 'Are the December cheques here or at Holdsworth?'

'Here, I think, sir,' said the clerk.

He went to one of a set of drawers behind George and produced a bundle of used cheques, which he handed to George. George undid the bundle, and found that cheque for £7500 which he had given to Tanderjee—it was endorsed 'for Jamsetjee and Mookerjee, Tanderjee.' Then he took from a drawer near him his bank pass-book, and compared the date of the cheque with the date when it had been paid: the latter date was but one day later than the former. Then he turned to his clerk, who was waiting his orders. 'Take this cheque,' said he, 'round to the bank and ask the cashier to be so good as to let me know how it was paid.'

While the clerk was gone on this errand, he wrote a letter to Gorgonio, saying that he was convinced Tanderjee had wilfully committed a fraud upon him, and was evidently gone off with the proceeds; but that he was determined to find him wherever he was; and that the cotton had better be sold for what it would fetch: if it was so bad, it would not count in the market, and therefore might serve them by inducing a rise of prices; but omitting all mention of Daniel's absence and offence. The letter finished, he gave it to Gorgonio's messenger and sent him off.

His own clerk returned from the bank with the cashier's answer to his demand: The cheque for £7500 had been paid to Mr Tanderjee in fourteen Bank of England notes for £500, and £500 in gold. That was doubly suspicious. Why had he taken so large a sum in gold?—and why had he not taken the usual means of transmitting part of the amount to Bombay?—unless he had from the first intended to levant. The next thing to do was to discover whether these fourteen notes for £500 each had been changed, and—if possible—to trace them, and so—by good luck, perhaps!—come at the whereabouts of the fraudulent Tanderjee. George looked at his watch: it was too late to ask the help of the bank that day.

But he turned and went through his papers, and set his work all in order, as if in preparation for a long absence. Then he went home in a consuming fever of impatience and resentment, with plenty of time for reflection before him. Daniel, Tanderjee, and Gorgonio!—could it be that they had all been in league to deceive and defraud him? But no! He could not believe it of Gorgonio!—his fortune was too much bound up with his own. But Daniel certainly had been hand in glove with Tanderjee, and it was probable they had gone off together. But how had Daniel managed to get at the plans to copy them? He went down to the counting-house when he had reached home and made what examination

he could. He saw—as his father had seen—clear evidence of tracing over the plans; but nothing more could he discover.

Next day he was astir betimes. Leaving orders for certain portmanteaus to be packed and to be brought into town to meet a certain train, he entered the works while the early morning bell still rang. He went round carefully and saw that all occupations were making orderly progress, and then he took the chief manager aside and said a few words to him.

'I am going to leave you in absolute charge at present, Mr Johnson. I daresay my father will come down to-morrow or the next day. That black scoundrel Trichinopoly and Tanderjee, the Parsee merchant, have played the fool with me and bolted; and I am going to find them, if I have to follow them to the other side of the world!'

'Hadn't you better leave that to the police, Mr George?' said Mr Johnson.

'I can't leave it all to the police: besides, the police are too slow. This is between ourselves.—Good-bye, Johnson.'

When he had eaten a scrap of breakfast, he hurried into town and went directly to a telegraph office, where he wrote a message to Isabel, his affianced wife, requesting her to be at home as much as possible that day, because he *must* see her, though he could not say when. Thence he went to the bank, related his suspicion of Tanderjee, and begged them to make what inquiries they could concerning the cashing of the notes, and telegraph to him at his father's house in Rutland Gate, where he expected to be about three o'clock. He drew a hundred pounds in notes and gold, and then—after a flying visit to the office—he went to the railway station. In a minute or two he was embarked on his journey in a white heat of rage and resentment—rage and resentment against himself, as well as against others—which was scarcely to be distinguished from an intense calm.

(To be continued.)

OLD SERVIAN CUSTOMS.

A YEAR OF SUPERSTITIONS.

By GRANT MAXWELL.

WITH the smoke of the steamboats and whistle of the locomotives, many of the ancient practices and superstitions of the Slavonic races are passing away. The Servians are probably amongst the least superstitious of the peoples of South-eastern Europe; but in their villages farthest removed from the influences of Western life one may yet find much that is new to us; new because so very old. Elsewhere, I have described their chief household fêtes of Christmas, and 'Slava,' the fête-day of the family patron saint; and I now propose to follow through 'a year of superstitions' as practised in rural districts where neither the 'steam demon,' nor even the less modern 'school-house,' is yet an innovation on the 'ancient ways.'

New-year's Day is called by the Serbs the 'Little Christmas;' and the head of the roasted pig or sheep, which was the chief dish of the Christmas feast, is eaten on New-year's Day. A particular kind of cake is made for this day,

called in the cities and towns, 'St Basil's Cake;' but in the villages it is called 'the cake for the she-bear.' The evening is spent by the young people in various modes of divination, especially in forecasting their marriage future. Later on, I will describe several of these usages, which may be taken as typical of them all.

St George's Day, April 24th, is the favourite time for 'charming.' Old and young are alike addicted in some mode or other to this practice; and even the few individuals who are strong-minded, or sceptical enough not to actively employ 'charms' themselves, take great pains to prevent other persons obtaining occult influences over their persons or possessions on this day. On the eve of St George, the men make small crosses with branches of special trees, and the next day throw these crosses on all fields and vineyards as a protection against hail-storms. The maidens on the same evening gather field-flowers, some of which are dried and pulverised into snuff, as a cure for colds. Other flowers are steeped all night with branches of certain trees in water caught from the foam of a water-mill, preparatory for use in bathing next morning. Yet other flowers are formed into bouquets and used to divine which of their lovers are most sincere. Each maiden makes as many bouquets as she claims admirers, giving to each bouquet the name of an admirer. At midnight, she places these bouquets in the garden, or on the roof of her residence. Before sunrise, she hurries to see on which bouquet most dew glistens; for that bouquet will bear the name of her truest swain. Early on St George's morning all young people bathe: the young men in running water, as a safeguard against leprosy. The young women bathe in their own gardens, amidst bushes of roses, and of another shrub whose Servian name means 'lovely breath.' The girls who wish a 'white face' place their field-flowers mixture of the previous evening all night under a white rose-tree; while those who prefer rosy cheeks place theirs under a red rose for the night; and in the morning throw the mixture thus 'charmed' into their morning baths.

Maidens desiring to 'charm' otherwise lukewarm beans select St George's Eve as the most propitious for their purpose. Making a bouquet of certain flowers, before placing it on the roof of their home, they adjure the bouquet thus: 'Oh flowers, my dear brothers, make — mad after me!'

Those who would ascertain, by the 'charm of the supper-table,' their destined husbands, put aside the first and the last crumbs of bread, bind these together with a piece of wood, and lay the whole under their pillows. The future spouse will appear in their midnight dreams; and as he may be away across the seas, the piece of wood is included in the 'charm' to serve him for a boat!

There are some less innocent 'charms' invoked on this wonderful St George's Eve. The dairy-women believe that on this night it is possible to cause, for the ensuing twelve months, the just product of their neighbour's flocks to flow into their own milk-pans; thereby not only doubling their own supply, but by the same act disabling a competitor. To effect this, the women must go before dawn, and entirely uncovered, to milk

the herds and flocks of the neighbour they hope to defraud. The farmers greatly dread this 'un-Christian charm,' and as a guard against it, smear their fences with animal manure.

In Servian towns, lamb is the usual roast for Easter Sunday; but in the country, most of the peasants do not taste lamb's meat until St George's Day.

In some Servian districts, every master of a household drives a lamb to church on this day, the lambs lying closely around the edifice while the men attend the service. A wax taper is lighted and fastened to the forehead of each lamb. At the conclusion of the service the officiating priest comes into the midst of the flock and recites a prayer for the prosperity of the pastoral pursuits of his parishioners. The lambs are then led home, killed, and roasted, their skins going as a perquisite to the priest.

The Serbs are addicted to sleep in the afternoons; but on St George's Day the most inveterate post-matutinal sleepers will manage to keep awake until nightfall, lest otherwise they should suffer from headaches all the year!

The Saturday preceding Pentecost is the chief day for remembering the dead. On this day the churchyards are filled with congregations. The priest hurries through the death registers. Mothers who have lost young children will not taste any fruit until they have distributed some amongst any children or poor people they may now meet; believing, if they do otherwise, that their own children in the other world will get no fruit there, and complain against the selfish parent who has forgotten them.

Pentecost is yet kept as a festival fully three days, although the authorities, and of late years even the Church officials, are endeavouring to lessen the period. Up to a few years ago, groups of fifteen to twenty young women in their best garments and covered with flowers, one carrying a white and red flag, another armed with a sword, passed from house to house dancing and singing mythological ballads. They were called 'The Queens' (Kralyize). But this custom can now seldom be seen, even in the most secluded hamlets.

From Easter Day to the following Sunday is the season called 'Zavetina.' Every Servian village, as a community, selects one of the days of this week to keep a peculiar festivity, going in procession with crosses and holy pictures through their cornfields and meadows, and resting before certain trees to hear prayers. These trees, growing in different portions of the village lands, are through a series of years visited on the same day in the same way. While the priests intone the prayers, all kneel, a posture the Servian peasant does not assume even in church more than twice or thrice in a year. After prayers, the parish priest and the mayor of the community renew with knives the cross which has been cut in the bark of each tree thus annually for many years. The procession moves from tree to tree, occasionally shouting loudly, 'Oh Lord, have mercy on us!' Sick persons, and especially sick children, are frequently laid on the ground, that the cross-bearers may pass over them; the peasant-women believing that such act, if it does not cure, will certainly improve the condition of the patients. Having made the round of the village lands, the

procession leaves the sacred pictures and crosses in the parish church. The household chiefs then dine together, under the presidency of the parish priest: the 'Kollivo' (baked and boiled and honeyed wheat) is served, and the Slava-cakes cut and broken in the orthodox 'Slava' methods, as this day is considered the village 'Slava.'

It is usual for Servian peasants, whenever they dine together, to forecast the future by the shoulder-bone of the roasted sheep or pig. The flat part of the bone is held to predict peace or war: if clear and white, peace; if rather dark, war. Near the upper end of the bone are some small holes, which are respectively called 'cradles' and 'graves'; and these, in various ways, are held to foreshow joy to some households and grief to others.

On the 15th of June, in some districts, all dresses and clothes are spread abroad, 'that the sun may see them.' On the eve of this day, the people generally gather a small red flower, steep it all night in holy-water, and use the water next morning as an eyewash 'to strengthen the sight.'

'St John's Day' (June 24th) is a grand anniversary for the Servian peasants; so august, that they say the sun arrests himself this day three times, out of fear and respect for the great saint. St John is peculiarly the patron of the shepherds, who, on Midsummer Eve, carry burning objects, made from the twigs and bark of a certain tree, thrice around their cattle-sheds and sheepfolds; then build large bonfires, and spend most of the night singing, springing now and again across the fires, and throwing aloft lighted branches.

The women make wreaths of a yellow field-flower called the flower of St John, and hang them on their houses. Even in Belgrade, the metropolis, can be seen on this day these wreaths adorning the fronts of many residences. In each wreath is intermixed a head of garlic, to be afterwards used in many methods of 'charming' away throat-swellings and other troublesome ailments. The maidens at this time peer in various ways into the future; such as throwing the white of freshly-laid eggs, or melted lead or wax, into shallow dishes of water, and by old, traditional rules, interpreting the forms the eggs, lead, or wax assume.

St Peter's Day (29th of June) is also a shepherds' festival. On the eve of this day, peculiar small cheeses are made, one for every member of the family, one for the parish priest, and two for the horns of the oldest sheep or cow.

St Elias's Day (July 21st) is held in great veneration, the peasants considering that lightning and thunder are under the control of this saint. They also say that St Elias and Mary Magdalene are brother and sister; and that Elias every day, for months previously, addresses Mary thus: 'Tell me, my sister, when my day comes, that I may also rejoice.' Mary always answers him: 'There are yet very many days to come and go before thy day arrives!' She deceives Elias thus until his day has passed over; because, if he knew his real day, he would keep it with such rejoicing that his lightnings and thunderings would smash the firmament and destroy the world!

From the 1st to the 15th of August the village women, and most of the men, strictly fast for 'the honour of the Madonna,' whose day is kept on the 15th with great solemnity, large crowds

congregating in and around the cloisters and churches.

Every church and cloister has a fixed, annual day—usually the day of the saint to whom the building is dedicated—on which is held what they call the Sabor, or 'the gathering.' Hundreds, in some places thousands, gather from far and near, many coming very long distances, on the evening before this festival, and sleep in fields and gardens near the church or monastery. After matins, dancing, singing, speaking, and cannon-firing continue until nightfall. Much business is transacted; flocks and herds change owners, new enterprises are inaugurated, and particularly new acquaintances formed to frequently issue in marriages. The 'Sabor' is also considered a good political school. Public affairs are freely discussed, and aspiring politicians utilise these 'gatherings' to the utmost.

Frequently, near young and joyous dancing groups, may be seen a smaller silent group of men with dimmed eyes and women weeping bitterly, because they have heard for the first time that since their last yearly meeting some valued relative or cherished friend has passed away.

Autumnal evenings are dear in the memory of every village matron. On these beautiful evenings, women of all ages, but still with the younger in the majority, meet at what they style 'Sela,' or 'sittings,' where they work together, knitting or spinning, with much singing and merriment. On these occasions the ancient crones entrust to new generations the household traditions relative to human life, and even more to the unseen life. Stories about fairies, witches, ghosts, vampires, miracles, find eager listeners; a weird or blood-curdling tale being quickly followed by some sweet sylvan song. These 'sittings' are held as long as the weather permits. When the cold winds and frosts terminate these open-air circles, the women of each household look eagerly forward to their chief winter festival, when the Baduyak logs shall blaze and scintillate on the Christmas hearth.

The Saturday prior to the 'Metrovdan' (October 26th, old style) is another of the 'Souls-days.' The churchyards are again filled with reverent villagers, the priests read the death registers and intone prayers for the dead, as on other days set apart for these solemn commemorations.

On St Barbara's Day (4th of December) a unique usage is observed. On the eve of this anniversary, a small portion of every species of grain is boiled all night in a pot over a wood-fire. Early in the morning the surface of the boiled grain is critically examined. Should the surface be uneven, it is thought a good omen; but if the surface be even, with occasional fissures, evil is prognosticated. After this investigation, a youth of the family is despatched with the pot and its contents to the river, spring, or well whence water is obtained for domestic use. He greets the water, throws into it three spoonfuls of the corn, and cries aloud: 'Oh God, give us honey and wax from flowers, dew from the heavens, grain and fruit from the earth; and of Thy mercy grant us health and joy!'

On his return home, the children and 'helpers' of the family sit down around the pot and partake of the remaining corn. This custom is called 'varize.'

The life of the Servian peasant may be crowded with superstitions, and often clouded with shadowy fears; but on the whole it is a joyous one, and much less irksome and wearisome than the existence of our Anglo-Saxon poor, so often uncertain of their to-morrow's bread.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

IN his lecture before the Royal Geographical Society, Dr Nansen, in referring to the necessity of keeping his crew employed and amused during their long sojourn in the Polar regions, described a great many ingenious devices by which that want could be met. Many of these depended upon the electric current, and as the current cannot be obtained practically without a dynamo and steam-engine to drive it, the question of extra-fuel provision comes under consideration. Dr Nansen met the difficulty by proposing that there should be a windmill on deck, which should furnish energy to accumulators, and when wind failed, the men could operate a 'walk-mill,' which, while storing electricity, would serve a further useful purpose in giving exercise to the crew.

Messrs Blake and Franklin, of the Kansas University, have lately examined a number of Indians belonging to various tribes, with a view to find out whether colour-blindness was as prevalent among savage races as it is among more civilised peoples. The Indians examined consisted of nearly three hundred males, and about half as many females, both full and half bloods, belonging to the Pawnee, Cheyenne, and Pottawatonic tribes. The test used was Holmgren's with Berlin wool. Only three cases of colour-blindness were detected; but it was suspected, from the hesitation shown in the choice of the coloured skeins by some of the half-breeds, that in their case the sense of colour may be limited.

The progress made in alloying aluminium with other substances has (says a contemporary) brought this metal rapidly to the foreground. There seems little doubt that its future rôle will be both important and significant. It is only quite lately that the alloy of aluminium with antimony has been known. We owe this to the work of Roche, who obtained it by melting the latter metal in a Perrot's oven, stirring the melted metal with an aluminium rod. In this way the temperature being gradually increased, it was found that an alloy was formed consisting of 18.37 per cent. of aluminium and 81.63 of antimony. Unfortunately, the properties of this product showed at once that for industrial purposes it was practically of no value; so that further research was required to investigate whether, by combining it with still a third metal, more satisfactory qualities could be produced. The results seem to have been rewarded with great success.

There seems a likelihood that 'villainous salt-petre' will speedily become a thing of the past, and it is possible that many now living may see gunpowder exhibited as a curiosity in our museums. The explosive which will probably take its place in warfare is known as Cordite,

which is a compound of nitroglycerine, gun-cotton, and mineral jelly. Experiments lately carried out at the Government proof-butts at Woolwich show that in many respects cordite is superior to gunpowder. In one case, a six-inch quick-firing gun loaded with fourteen pounds of cordite was found to give a higher velocity with hardly any increase of pressure on the gun than when it was loaded with double that weight of black gunpowder. A more important point is that the new explosive causes no erosion in the gun-tube. Cordite has the appearance of long pieces of thin black or gray cord, and it is being manufactured at the Government Powder-mills at Waltham Abbey. It is not yet known whether it will keep so well as gunpowder.

Soapstone, or Steatite, which is manufactured by the Chinese into miniature pagodas and other ornaments, is found in the neighbourhood of Wen-chow, and our consul there has recently given an interesting account of the mines and the people by whom they are worked. The hills containing the mineral are owned by twenty or thirty families, who lead a hard life, living in straw huts on the hill-sides. The steatite is principally valued according to its colour, after which size and shape come next in importance. Purple, mottled-red, black, blue, and gray are all valued; but the greatest store is set upon the steatite which is perfectly white. The industry finds employment for about two thousand persons, including both miners and carvers, and a great impetus has been given to it since Wen-chow was opened up to foreign trade. Steatite is much used in the manufacture of gas-burners, for although a soft stone, it will withstand heat to a wonderful extent.

In a paper read before the Franklin Institute (Philadelphia) on the Causes of Fires, the author, Mr C. J. Hexamer, devoted some attention to the dangers arising from employing inferior petroleum for lamps, and he remarked that in order to be safe it should have a flash-test of at least one hundred and thirty degrees. By non-technical listeners this caution would not have been readily understood unless the lecturer had given directions for testing the oil by flash. As the information may be valued by others, we reproduce it. The oil can be readily tested by pouring it upon some sand in a vessel which will stand heat. A thermometer is placed in the oil, and heat is applied to the outer receptacle. At the same time an ignited taper, with the smallest possible flame, is held above the oil, but is not allowed to touch it. The temperature of the oil is accurately observed, and if the vapour from it flashes before the mercury rises to one hundred and thirty degrees, it is unfit for household use.

The 'Pioneer Mail' of India lately recorded a case which seems to indicate that there is some foundation for the common belief that if a cobra be killed and its remains are left in a bungalow, snakes of the same species will be attracted to the place. The story goes that about a year ago the occupant of a bungalow at Dinapore killed a large cobra, which was duly stuffed and set up as a trophy. Since this event no fewer than eight large cobras have been killed there, one of them being found sitting up, with hood extended, looking at the house, and the others making towards

the premises. It is a curious fact that no cobras have been seen in other parts of the station.

At the Marine Biological Laboratory at Plymouth some experiments have for the last two or three years been in progress, the object of which has been to determine whether or not the dark coloration on the upper side of flat fishes is due to the action of light. In order to settle this question, several plaice, turbot, &c., were put into tanks covered at the top, but with light reflected from below by means of mirrors. Under this treatment it was found that the white under-sides of the fish gradually became spotted, and that these spots amalgamated until the entire under-skin became dark. Photographic records have been made of these gradual changes, and the pictures are full of interest.

The 'Chemical Trades Journal' gives an interesting account of the various industrial uses of the comparatively new substance known as Silicate of Soda, or Water-glass. It is largely used in the manufacture of cheap soaps, and can be usefully employed in cleansing all kinds of articles when the action of caustic soda is too energetic, and when ordinary washing soda is not strong enough. As a case in point, the greasy cotton waste used by Continental railway companies is recovered by its aid a dozen times; while formerly, when caustic soda was employed, it could only be renewed two or three times. Silicate is also a substitute for caustic soda in the bleaching of jute and hemp waste for paper-making, and is used for waterproofing paper. It is a fixing agent for alumina and other mordants in cotton; it will render textile fabrics incombustible; it enters largely into the manufacture of artificial stones, of enamels, and paints; it is employed for rendering timber fireproof, and walls waterproof, and has many other applications in various arts and manufactures.

Lieutenant H. R. Sayce recently crossed the English Channel in a boat only eight and a half feet long, with a beam of thirty-two inches, and with a total weight of only thirty-five pounds. The little vessel was covered with canvas, which fitted tightly round the body of its adventurous occupant, but left his arms at liberty to work his paddles, his progress being further helped by a couple of small sails. The boat is apparently on the Berthon principle—that is to say, it is inflated with air, is collapsible when not in actual use, and is regarded as being unsinkable. The boat in question made its journey from Dover to Boulogne in fourteen hours.

All machinery in which cog-wheels are employed must necessarily be rather noisy, and great ingenuity has been expended in reducing the noise as much as possible. A new departure has been made by an Austrian firm by the introduction of toothed wheels made of pressed raw hides, which are designed to work in conjunction with wheels of cast-iron, steel, or other metals. The new wheels are said to be strong enough for the purpose, to require no lubricating, and to reduce vibration materially.

At the Conference recently convened by the Museums' Association at the Zoological Society's rooms, London, several papers of interest were read and discussed. Among these was one by Mr R. Newstead of Chester, 'On the Use of Boracic Acid as a Preservative for Bird-skins.'

With great confidence he commended this agent to taxidermists, and said that during the past three years he had preserved no fewer than three hundred skins with it, and had found that it was efficacious even on such large skins as those of swans and geese. He also spoke of its value as a fish-preserver.

The recent terrible collision of two war-ships, by which so many valuable lives were lost, has naturally called attention to appliances by which life may be saved under similar circumstances. Mr Adey, of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, has invented what he calls a 'Combined Ship's Buoy.' This apparatus consists of a hollow copper shell constructed with water-tight compartments, which is practically unsinkable. It is designed to be carried on a steamer's bridge, and is connected by a stout wire-cable to a revolving drum beneath the ship's deck. In case of the vessel foundering, the buoy would immediately become detached from its supports, and would when it touched the water automatically discharge rockets and blue-lights, while at the same time it would sound a bell and throw out cork-supported life-lines. Even if all these measures failed to save life the buoy would indicate the exact position of the wreck, and would therefore make salvage operations possible. The inventor will supply all particulars if he be addressed at 12 Clare Street, Bristol.

The art of refrigeration and carriage of dead-meat has now arrived at such perfection that the best brands of New Zealand mutton can hardly be distinguished even by experts from the finest Southdown. It is therefore not uncommon for the foreign meat to be sold as British, to the great profit of the trader and to the prejudice of the buyer. A Committee of the House of Lords was recently appointed to consider the question whether it would not be to the interest of honest traders and their customers that foreign meat should be marked, and it was quickly found that the chief obstacle to the proposal was an effective method of making the mark without spoiling the meat. The problem seems to have been solved by branding the meat by means of a platinum wire brought to a white-heat by electricity.

According to Professor Uffelmann of Rostock, cholera bacilli can be easily conveyed from place to place by the postman. After infecting an ordinary letter with the bacilli, he put it into a postbag, and found, after twenty-four hours, that the organisms were still living. On post-cards they remained in an active state twenty hours after infection; but they died rapidly on coins. Flies also he found were most effective carriers of cholera bacilli, an infected insect causing a piece of beef upon which it alighted to swarm with living organisms. The lesson to be learned from these experiments is that of scrupulous cleanliness. At the same time it stands to reason that unless there was some natural antidote to this wholesale dissemination of deadly organisms, human life on this earth must have long ago ceased to be.

It has been suggested that, instead of taking so much pains to stamp out cholera by quarantine restrictions, the evil should be dealt with at its point of origin. This is believed to cover a region of about eight thousand square miles at the mouth of the river Ganges, and to

be caused by the amount of animal and vegetable putrid matter which is allowed to collect in the water there. The sacred Ganges has for years untold been used as a cemetery, and the custom would possibly be difficult to eradicate; but the natives might be compelled to cremate their dead before consigning the remains to the river. It is doubtful, however, whether a disease which has travelled so far from its country of origin can be thus eradicated. The idea savours somewhat of the still prevalent notion that the best remedy against risk from dog-bite is to kill the animal which caused the injury.

Japan, says the 'Revue Géographique,' is especially rich in mineral springs of a therapeutic value, and the people are fully alive to the benefits of taking advantage of these natural remedies for various ailments. These mineral waters may be divided into four classes—sulphur, saline, alkaline, and ferruginous. In many cases the Japanese employ the water in the form of a douche, and will place themselves under cascades for the purpose. One spring which is highly valued emerges from the ground perfectly clear and limpid, almost tasteless; yet it is strongly impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen, and soon becomes clouded and deposits sulphur. These waters are beneficial in cases of muscular and chronic rheumatism, and for certain skin diseases. Hot springs also abound in Japan, as might be expected in a country in which volcanic energy is so constantly active.

One of the most interesting relics of Old London is St John's Gate, Clerkenwell, which, because it does not happen to lie in one of the main arteries of the big city, is not so well known, even to Londoners, as it should be. It is the only remaining portion of the important Priory of St John, which dates from the fourteenth century. The old gateway has a literary interest attached to it, for in the room above the archway Dr Johnson worked for Cave the printer for a small weekly stipend; and the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' which to this day bears a picture of the archway on its cover, was first printed here. The archway had latterly become much defaced and weather-worn, but it has recently been restored as a memorial to the late Duke of Clarence, who was first Sub-prior of the Order of St John. The Order as now revived embraces the St John Ambulance Association, and is busy in other good works.

A demonstration was lately given of a new electro-cyanide process for separating gold from difficult ores—that is, ores associated with sulphur, iron oxide, antimony, zinc, &c. Hitherto, the presence of these undesirable substances has caused the mercury used for amalgamation to become dirty, or sluggish, and incapable of seizing the particles of gold brought into contact with it. In the present process, an apparatus is employed by which all difficulties seem to be surmounted by combined chemical and electrical action. It is the invention of Mr J. B. Hannay, who has devoted many years to its elaboration. By this appliance the precious metal is extracted from the ore without any preliminary treatment other than crushing. The chemicals employed are used over and over again, and the gold and silver are obtained from the amalgam at once in the

metallic state. Any workable quantity of ore may, it is said, be treated in one vessel and at one operation, and the gold obtained from it the same day. The demonstration was given by the Universal Gold Extraction Syndicate of 73 Basinghall Street, London.

Any one who has watched the operation of coaling a vessel—say a Channel steamer—with its files of men, each black as the burden which he carries, must have been struck with the waste of labour and the unnecessary dirt that the work seems to entail. In an age when so many much more difficult processes are carried out by machinery, the method seems ridiculous and clumsy. Mr M. J. Paul has invented a system of coaling by which time is saved, dirt is prevented, and a great economy of labour secured. The coal is conveyed from vessel to vessel on the dredger principle, the conveyer of the material consisting of an endless steel chain, to which is attached a number of bucket-shaped steel plates. This conveyer can be altered so as to suit the height of the ship which is being coaled, and it dips into a barge of special design by which the coal is brought within constant reach of the travelling buckets. A demonstration of the working of this new system was recently given at Rotherhithe before an assembly which included representatives of the Admiralty and of several steamship companies. On this occasion, one hundred and twenty tons of coal were embarked in seventy-five minutes, the ordinary rate of bunkering coal by manual labour being about eighty tons per day.

The results of scientific observations made during the Antarctic expedition which recently returned to Dundee are said to be of an important character, but there is much as yet to be done in collating and arranging the notes made. We are informed by the 'Dundee Advertiser,' which has published singularly comprehensive articles concerning the expedition, that Dr Donald, who acted as surgeon on board the 'Active,' had collected a large number of birds, mosses, and eggs indigenous to the Antarctic regions. Seven distinct varieties of penguins were observed, and specimens of four of these have been brought home. The other birds are very interesting to the naturalist, and are said to include at least one entirely new species. Skeletons of the different classes of seals have been preserved, and will probably be sent to the principal museums.

A CHAT ABOUT WHALES.

STEAM and the screw-propeller have lessened the whaler's dangers; but 'the fish' are apparently more shy than in the good old days, and certainly more scarce. Whales were frequently killed before they had reached maturity, and this indiscriminate destruction of old and young left unstocked grounds. Hence some of our whalers have again attempted to woo fickle fortune in the lone Southern Ocean. This is not a new departure, for many years ago Messrs Enderby established a whaling colony at the Auckland Islands, about one hundred and eighty miles south of New Zealand. Her Majesty's ship 'Havannah,' with a dozen other vessels, took live-stock and

supplies thither from England and elsewhere; and several schooners from Australia put in an appearance with various kinds of goods for sale to the workmen congregated at this out-of-the-way place. Everything was taken into consideration save the weather, which proved most inclement; and the venture failed utterly. In December 1842, Ross saw many huge whales near Darwin Islet, six hundred miles from the Falklands. They were so tame that the ship almost touched them before they would move.

Excessive estimates of a whale's bulk are met with occasionally; one measuring a hundred and fifty feet in length probably belonged to prehistoric times. Milton's words are apposite in this connection:

There leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep,
Stretched like a promontory, sleeps or swims.

Captain David Gray of Peterhead, a mighty hunter of whales, seems to favour the more moderate view, that the average size of a full-grown Greenland whale does not exceed sixty feet. Whales, if unmolested, attain to a ripe old age; and may, for aught that is known to the contrary, become crabbed centenarians. In 1890 the crew of an American whaler, the 'Beluga,' are said to have killed a large whale in Behring Sea, in which was discovered a harpoon bearing the name of another whaleship, the 'Moctezuma,' of sixty years previously; thus proving that the whale had carried the iron with it during the threescore years. Captain David Gray once killed a very large female whale having a harpoon embedded in her blubber, which had been in position for thirty years, as evidenced by the date it bore.

A detailed description of these curious cetaceans would occupy more space than is at our disposal; but a few eventful experiences with scattered members of the family at various times will not be without interest. Sindbad the Sailor is responsible for a whale-story which, if not true, has at least the merit of being well told. Reclining motionless upon the sea-surface, this denizen of the deep was mistaken for an islet. Its grass-covered back resembled a verdant meadow, and the hardy toilers landed thereon to stretch their weary limbs after the manner of pious Æneas and his followers. Suddenly the slumbering cetacean sank beneath their feet, and great was the amazement thereat.

More reliable instances of whales confounded with rocks are not far to seek. Admiral Sir F. Beaufort ran his smart frigate into the River Plate in 1807 with studding-sails set below and aloft. An uncharted rock was reported right ahead; but sure of his position, no alteration was made in the course steered. Barnacles, breakers, and long weeds, were soon plainly observable; yet, when the ship's sails flapped with a loud noise, this supposititious rock disappeared. It was but a whale having his post-prandial forty winks. Weddell in his voyage towards the South Pole in 1822 mistook the swollen carcase of a dead whale for a half-tide rock.

It is said that the crew of an American schooner, the 'C. H. White,' had an exciting adventure not

long since on the Oregon coast. All hands save cook and captain were away in small boats halibut-fishing, when a large school of whales passed their ocean home. One of these unwelcome visitors collided with and broke the cable that held the schooner to her anchor. Becoming entangled therewith, he towed the helpless vessel in divers directions for six hours. Eventually, he succeeded in effecting his escape, and dived deeply out of sight. Something similar happened still more recently to a whale of an inquiring turn of mind. A Brazilian submarine telegraph cable was found to work badly about seventy miles from the land; and upon being hauled to the surface for repairs, the dead body of a large whale was discovered caught by the cable, which was twisted into most complicated knots.

The immense jawbones of a whale have not only served to stop a chink after decay, but also to form the gateway of a rustic garden when in good condition. The Emperor William of Germany has ordained that the bones of whales killed during his whaling expedition last summer shall be made into furniture for his boat-house at Potsdam. A German lady is to paint a description of the incidents of the chase upon the shoulder-bones of the slaughtered cetaceans, so that they may ornament the interior of the boat-house together with the numerous photographs taken during the expedition.

In January 1856 the sailing-ship 'Fusilier' was in 25 degrees north, 48 degrees west, about ten o'clock one morning, when her commander, Captain Carmichael, was surprised by a rumbling noise like that of an earthquake. The ship trembled throughout her whole length, causing the alarmed watch below to seek safety on deck without delay. This shock was repeated no fewer than a dozen times, at intervals of two minutes' duration. Soon two enormous whales appeared from beneath the ship, swam lazily about, blew several times, then went back to their retreat, and repeated the performance. It is probable that they found unalloyed satisfaction in rubbing themselves on the shells which adhered in clusters to the iron bottom of the 'Fusilier.'

In February 1875, the sailing-vessel 'Albertine,' Captain Owen, struck something considerably harder than water one foggy night while travelling five knots an hour in 42 degrees south, 75 degrees east. The officer in charge of the watch, somewhat scared, observed a line of foam on the port bow, and was about to alter her course, imagining that she had touched on an unknown shoal. Thereupon, a whale thrashed the water with his flail-like tail, snorted loudly, and sped swiftly to windward. He had doubtless been sleeping peacefully until aroused with scant ceremony by the vessel's advancing stem, and then stood not on the order of his going.

The iron barque 'Elissa,' in 1887, while crossing the South Indian Ocean, ran right into a whale. She escaped injury; but the whale fared badly, as it was afterwards seen floundering about astern in a dazed condition. An infuriated cetacean attacked the whaleship 'Essex' with fell intent, smashing in her bows, and causing her to founder. The crew took to their boats; but only a few enfeebled survivors reached the nearest land, after an awful experience of many leaden-footed hours. Strange to relate, another 'Essex' was seri-

ously damaged by a vicious whale near Zanzibar in 1887.

The steamship 'Petersburg,' of the Russian volunteer fleet, had a unique experience near Minicoy, in the South Indian Ocean. A sharp shock was felt by all on board, and she stopped, as though gripped in a vice. The sea was found to be coloured with the lifeblood of two huge whales, which lay floating in their last agony. One was cut through by the steamer's sharp stem, and the other killed by repeated blows of the screw-propeller.

The German steamship 'Waesland,' bound from Antwerp to New York, ran into and killed a sleeping whale. A smaller steamer, the 'Kelroe,' collided with a whale near Seaham Harbour, and wounded it badly. The celebrated yacht 'Genesta' narrowly avoided collision with a dead cetacean during the Jubilee race round our islands. In 1889 a Shields steamship, the 'James Turpie,' nearly cut a whale in two one starlight night. The schooner 'O. M. Marrett' was almost wrecked by passing whales in the North Atlantic. Many of the school struck her repeatedly with such violence that her whole hull shook, and articles in the officers' rooms were thrown to the floor.

In 1890 a small sailing-vessel, the 'Ocean Spray,' bound from Galveston to England, struck a sleeping whale, and received damage. On the morning of the 17th July, a whale fifty feet long made his appearance close alongside the steamship 'Port Adelaide,' Captain C. M. Hepworth, R.N.R., in 42 degrees south, 75 degrees east. He followed the vessel for four days, never more than seventy yards away, and generally close astern, much to the edification of numerous passengers. He threw up the sponge in 41 degrees south, 97 degrees east, after travelling nine hundred and eighty statute miles, certainly without resting, and apparently fasting. In November the ship 'Earnock,' Captain Parson, was under sail in 29 degrees south, 21 degrees west, when a large whale lashed the sea into foam with his tail, so near the ship that the chief officer, who happened to be below forward, came quickly on deck to see what had happened. He actually felt the impact of the water against her bows.

In June 1891, while Her Majesty's ship 'Immortalité' was steaming from Arosa Bay to Gibraltar at the rate of twelve knots an hour, she stopped short, as though a submerged danger had been located. It was presently found that she had cut deeply into a whale, and it became necessary to go astern in order to get rid of the encumbrance. Four months later, the Anchor line steamship 'Ethiopia' collided with a whale when about eight hundred miles from New York. One hour before noon, Captain Wilson and Second-officer Fife were on the bridge, and noticed this whale rise to the surface only a few feet ahead of the swiftly-moving steamship directly in her path. The 'Ethiopia,' steaming sixteen knots an hour, crashed into the cetacean, and the suddenness of the shock almost caused a panic among her passengers. She seemed to cut him completely in two, and a crimson wake was left as far as the eye could distinguish astern. In December the barque 'Rokeby Hall,' near Valparaiso, 33 degrees south, 73 degrees west, was gliding gaily along towards her port before a fair

wind, with smooth water beneath and a bright sun overhead. A whale about sixty feet long, moving in a direction at right angles to the barque's track, struck her just amidships. The 'Rokeby Hall' escaped unhurt, although the blow was dealt directly on the water-line with an awful momentum; but the whale was last seen apparently lifeless, and the water in the vicinity was red with blood. This collision may have been purely accidental, and perchance due to the unfortunate whale's defective vision.

In June 1892 the Cunard liner 'Aurania,' Captain H. Walker, passed so close to a large whale in 48 degrees north, 31 degrees west, that her stem only cleared it by a very short distance. In September the White Star liner 'Germanic,' Captain Cameron, when in 47 degrees north, 46 degrees west, cut a whale down as it lay in a deep sleep upon the sea-surface.

Man has been the relentless foe of these harmless but marketable creatures from very early days. The fearless Biscayan put forth against them in nutshell navies; larger vessels followed them still farther into the icy fastnesses adjacent to the North Pole; and steam-whalers have penetrated where not many years since Arctic discovery-ships found it difficult to reach. Propagation of the whale species was ruthlessly deemed unworthy of consideration by competing whalers, and unless the whale's shyness had increased, causing him to retreat into less accessible waters, it is not improbable that he would have become as extinct as the dodo. A close-time for whales might have some effect in counteracting the fierce greed for gold regardless of the future.

A SUMMER NIGHT IN MANIKA.

LIKE one of that all tender Sisterhood,

Who seem as angels in the fainting sight

Of wounded warriors, who have bravely stood

The charge of foemen, in the day-gone fight;

So with her star-lit cross, refreshing Night

In mantle gray steals forth, as if she would

Exhausted Nature recreate, with dreams

Of cloudy skies, cool winds, and running streams;

While spreads attendant Moon her silver light

Soft o'er the weary camp, that still and white

Now sleeps, secure, behind a guard of trees,

Kept ever wakeful by the whispering breeze,

Lest aught should find them in unwatchful mood,

Pass through their lines, and break the solitude.

CHARLES MURRAY.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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THE ORANGE RIVER.

By H. A. BRYDEN.

It is a striking fact that although the Orange River has been known to the Cape Colonists for a longer period than almost any other river in South Africa, at the present time almost as little information can be gathered about it as in the early years of this century. There are, naturally, some reasons to be adduced for this strange neglect; but, considering the wonderful advances of discovery in all parts of South Africa in recent years, the impulse of the diamond-mining industry lying almost adjacent to the great stream, and the undoubted metalliferous wealth of the mountains along its course, the continued isolation of the Orange River is remarkable.

Here is a principal South African river, rising in the rugged peaks of the Quathlamba, Basutoland, flowing for twelve hundred miles before it reaches the South Atlantic, and receiving upon its passage the waters of the Vaal, the Caledon, the Nosop, Great Fish, Sea-cow, and other systems. And yet—except to cross it by railway or pontoon on his feverish rush to Kimberley, Johannesburg, or the far interior—no colonist or traveller now ever sets eyes on, or troubles his mind about this the most important stream of the Cape. At this day all that we know about this great system—the ancient Gariep of the Hottentots, the Vigita Magna of Old World cartographers, the Groote (great) Rivier of the frontier Boers—is to be gleaned from some scant pages in the Travels of Campbell (1813), Thompson (1824), Alexander (1836), and Moffat the missionary, whose interesting Travels were published in the forties. Thompson and Moffat are the only two travellers who have made their way for any considerable distance along the river-banks below the Great Falls. A few years back, Mr Farini, in his book 'Through the Kalahari Desert,' added considerably to our knowledge of these wonderful yet little-known Falls themselves. Le Vaillant, the French naturalist, in his journeys (*circa* 1784)

asserts that he crossed the Orange about that period for the purpose of hunting giraffes in Namaqualand; but an old Boer lady, who survived far into the present century, always stoutly affirmed that the 'klein Franchsman' never did pass the river; and the accounts of this volatile and amusing traveller have in other respects always to be taken with a considerable pinch of salt.

Throughout the last century, the Dutch, moving from their base round about Cape Town, slowly, as is their wont, and slowly, too, for the reason that they had to conquer savage animals, parched deserts, difficult mountain ranges, and occasionally hostile tribes, spread themselves over the present Cape Colony, and settled sparsely in remote districts. The more restless and adventurous among them, the elephant-hunters, unconsciously pioneered the way. And at last, somewhere between 1760 and 1770, one or two of these rude hunters of the wilderness, penetrating with incredible toil beyond their fellows, came suddenly upon a mighty river flowing rapidly over a broad bed towards the ocean. This 'Groote Rivier,' as they incontinently dubbed it, seemed to the wanderers to lie in a terrestrial paradise. Dense groves of giraffe-acacia, the thorny mimosa, willows, and the bastard ebony, adorned the banks; game was plentiful, and upon every hand water-fowl, guinea-fowl, and francolins were to be seen in inconceivable plenty. Upon the northern banks wandered, free and unconcerned, a stupendous quadruped utterly new to the wanderers—the tall giraffe, a creature then unknown to modern Europe—concerning which the amazed hunters took down-country with them the most marvellous accounts. Fired by this news, Colonel Gordon, an energetic Scotch officer in the service of the Batavian Government at the Cape, hurried to the north; and in 1770 himself at length setting eyes upon the Great River, named it the Orange, in honour of the hereditary Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic.

One can well imagine the keen pleasure and excitement with which these early Dutch hunters

—big, hardy men, clad in the skins of game, and armed with the immensely long flint-lock guns ('roers,' they called them) of those days—after struggling for weeks and months through a country riverless and almost waterless for the most part, first hailed the vision of this noble stream. And with what delight they must have noticed the troops of elephants, rhinoceroses, giraffes, and other great game wandering as they had wandered for ages amid the thickets, the schools of hippopotami—sea-cows, the Boers mis-call them—wallowing in the flood, the wealth of water and of grasses for their overwrought oxen and horses, and the prodigal display of flowers and flowering shrubs springing everywhere about them!

The Orange River drains an area of four hundred thousand square miles, some portions of it highly mountainous, as in its earlier course; others, as the deserts of the Kalahari to the north, and Great Bushmanland to the south, flat, or only slightly undulating. It is of course best known in the region near the junction of the Vaal River, where the busy diamond-seekers have for miles exploited its bed and banks. Perhaps it may be seen at its fairest in the neighbourhood of Aliwal North, in the more settled regions of Cape Colony, far though that village is from the river-mouth. In time of drought, the river in many places is shallow, and shows an inconsiderable volume of water; this may be especially noticed as one crosses the railway bridge on one's way to Kimberley. And although here and there, even in the dry season, fine deep reaches are to be met with, it must be confessed that as a whole the river is not, nor ever can be, a navigable one. In time of flood, when its volume is enhanced by the storm-waters of the Quathlamba, Stormbergen, Nieuwveld, and Roggeveld ranges, and the immense floods of the Vaal, Caledon, and other systems, the river rushes downwards to the sea in one mighty, roaring, yellow torrent, sometimes half a mile in width, and, crashing with inconceivable fury over the great falls of Angrabies, seeks an outlet towards ocean. And yet, strange to say, with all this effort, all this fury, its mouth will be found to be hopelessly barred by a miserable sandbank, which effectually forbids all attempts to clear an exit, except for a few days at a time, when the angry torrent raves its way through the sand and issues sheer out to sea.

From this sandbank upwards there is a stretch of water some thirty miles in extent, which is navigable for small boats. Between the Great Falls and this point run for an immense distance the so-called Gariepine Walls, enormous masses of rugged and almost inaccessible mountains, which frown above the river-course, and in many places completely hem it in, so that no man shall find his way down to the water. All around lies an inhospitable and waterless desert, so that the traveller braving the dangers of this region,

although he knows that water in plenty lies near at hand, is in danger of dying of thirst from sheer inability to make a way to the stream beneath him. This wild and precipitous region of the Gariepine Walls is practically as unexplored and unknown as it was at the beginning of the century, or indeed a thousand years ago. Except the little mission station of Pella on the southern bank, and the village of Upington, in the new district of Gordonia—part of British Bechuanaland—a little above the Great Falls, upon the northern bank, there are absolutely no settlements or villages upon the lower course of the Orange. The district of Gordonia has much improved of late years; and, thanks to an excellent system of irrigation, a fine cattle 'veldt,' and an energetic little community, shows symptoms of considerable advance. The only other inhabitants of the lower Orange are a few Korannas—a branch of the Hottentot family—Hottentots, and Bushmen, who wander hither and thither and pick up a precarious subsistence.

The larger game has now mostly disappeared from the Orange River. A few hippopotami are still found here and there below the falls; a few koodoos and hartebeests yet linger; small antelopes are plentiful; leopards and baboons abound in the mountains. Everywhere, save for the smaller mammals, reptiles, and an abundance of feathered life, is silence and desert solitude. And yet it is difficult to say why this should be so. It has been proved that much of the mountain region about the lower Orange is highly metalliferous. Iron ores, hematite, copper, crocidolite, an asbestiform mineral of considerable commercial value, argentiferous lead, and even gold, have all been found here. Copper is particularly abundant. Only thirty or forty miles south, the well-known Cape copper mines have for years turned out prodigious quantities of high-grade ore. Very beautiful garnets—red and green—agates, quartz crystals, bloodstone, amethysts, jaspers, and chalcedony, are found in the Orange or along its course. Pseudo-crocidolite, a very handsome fibrous quartz, largely used for jewellery, is often abundant. Diamonds have been found at least as far down the river as Prieska, probably much below. And it seems highly probable that the beautiful gravels of the Orange must contain quantities of diamonds washed from the diamondiferous portions of the Vaal, if indeed the Orange be not itself a diamond-bearing river.

Why the Cape Colonists have not better explored their greatest river no one quite knows; probably a sparse population and the attractions of Kimberley and Johannesburg may account for the isolation and neglect of this singularly interesting region. The country is difficult of access, and toilsome in its exploration, but not insurmountably so. British folk have never yet been deterred by such obstacles. And if a small and well-equipped expedition, including in its numbers good native guides and an experienced

mining engineer, were to essay the exploitation of the lower Orange, it is pretty certain that its labours would be rewarded by some very remarkable mineral discoveries.

POMONA.*

By the Author of 'Laddie,' 'Tip Cat,' 'Lil,' &c.

CHAPTER III.

O well for the fisherman's boy
That he shouts with his sister at play;
O well for the sailor lad
That he sings in his boat on the bay.

TENNYSON.

I CANNOT help wishing, as I begin this chapter, that it were the adventures of Nigel, Dennis, and Will that I had to chronicle, and of Kitty, too, for she had her adventures as well as the boys, and went shrimping, pot-hauling, trawling, cliff-climbing, bathing, swimming, mushroom-gathering, and all the rest of it, with the best of them. She learned to pull an oar with her little brown hands; she could help to haul in a net or furl a sail; she was the pride and pet of all the fishermen. I have seen a sketch of her sitting on the end of a boat pulled up on the beach, with the peaked, red fisherman's cap she wore perched on her rough, curly, brown hair; and her short serge petticoat showing her little, bare, brown feet and ankles dangling; while below sat a group of the men mending their nets and baiting their lobster pots, and, no doubt, telling long yarns to amuse little Miss, with as much of the rough language as they could smother or swallow left out on her account. She would go lobster-catching with Lot Leach, rowing round from one large cork to another of the twenty set out dancing on the green water; and draw up the round net attached to each, with sometimes a shining lobster in his black coat of mail a captive therein.

There was a sort of fascination to Kitty in old Lot's company, and, as long as she was with him, Sage felt no anxiety as to her safety, which was not the case at first, when the children were out with some of the other men. On one occasion they were out with Ben Caster in his boat, and the wind changed so that the trawler could not get in till midnight, and Sage watched and watched on the beach, straining her eyes through the darkness, and feeling almost a hatred of the sea, that came up so gently to her feet, and then ran back, drawing the little pebbles with a coaxing deprecating sound, as if it were only a harmless, playful creature, incapable of swallowing up great ships and drowning strong men.

She was anxious, too, when the four had gone out under Cottam the coastguardman to see a smugglers' cave half-way down the cliff, which was to be reached by a somewhat break-neck scrambling path.

'Never you fear, Missy; I'll look arter 'em right enough. Taint nothing to be onaisy over, as long as folks keeps steady and minds what they're after.'

But Sage came across Mrs Rockett directly they were gone, who, without the least intending to frighten her, gave her such a succession of blood-curdling accounts of accidents 'on them

'orrid cliffs as lef me a widder, and my poor little ones orphings, and him with the silver watch his father give him in his pocket, and stopped at twenty minutes to eleven, as must have been the very time as he walked right over the edge; though it might have been ten minutes or so earlier, as it always were a watch as gained, and does now, as you can see it hung up over my shelf with a dint in its case where it got a knock when he fell; and Tom, my eldest boy, should 'a had it in memory like of his poor father; only his master give him one with his name and a inscription on it, after that fire at the works as I've told you of, ain't I?'

'I suppose Mr Cottam is very careful, isn't he?' Sage asked.

Mrs Rockett shook her head dubiously. 'He's the first of his family, then; for of all the keardless, feather-brained lot, them Cottams is the worst. I mind once giving Jim Cottam a pair of boots of mine to take into Shingle to get mended; and one of the neighbours came in half an hour after and says, says he: "Look what I've pick up on the road, Mrs Rockett," says he. And there was my boots where my lord had dropped 'em; and that was how I come to let Lot try his hand at cobbling; and he don't do it badly, though he takes his time over it.'

But the reader will accuse me of being given to digression as much as Mrs Rockett herself, for I was saying how much I wished that I was the chronicler of the younger Merridews' adventures at Scar, which were many in number. But 'that,' as a great author of the present day would say, 'is another story;' and our business in hand is with Sage, who, though she was not at all above joining in some of the children's adventures, was frequently left to her own devices, and might have found it dull if she had been, like many other girls, entirely dependent for enjoyment on other people's society.

So when Sage got over her nervousness about possible mishaps befalling Kitty or the boys on the sea or shore or cliffs—and when a visit to Shingle had supplied the defects in her paint-box, which she had not had time to think of before she came away, she did not find the long August days go by at all too slowly. And she had made a friend, besides, of all the kindly Scar folk who might be reckoned as friends from the day of their arrival; and if company and talk had been what Sage wanted to make her happy, she need not have gone many paces from her own door to get plenty of it, even if Mrs Rockett, standing with arms akimbo at the door of the 'Black Dog,' had not prevented her crossing the threshold with her flow of conversation in a high-pitched voice across the street. From every doorway down the street some friendly voice called to her; she had half-a-dozen instructors in the art of lace-making.

But it was to none of these I referred when I said that Sage had made a friend for whose sake she cut Mrs Rockett's digressions short, and turned a deaf ear to the voices that hailed her from the cottage doors, and to the rattle of the bobbins, and pulled her skirt out of the fattest baby hand that sought to detain her, and hardly vouchsafed a glance at the most engaging starfish or persuasive sidelong crab, and passed, with a nod and smile, the group by the wall, and

hurried on to where a large white umbrella might be seen under the cliff some way along the beach, looking like one of those big mushrooms that the children brought in from the meadows.

It was none other than 'the painter gentleman as lived up to Scar Cliff Farm and made pitch-ters,' who was Sage's friend, and who had offered his help at Shingle Station on their first arrival, when she was overwhelmed with her multifarious packages; and she made his acquaintance that very night of which mention has been made, when she was in a panic about the children who were out trawling. It was the first week of their stay at Scar, and Sage was still as anxious over the children as a hen whose ducklings have just taken to the water; and no one could persuade her that a sudden change of wind was a thing of constant occurrence, and that you are reckoning without your host if you settle the exact time at which a sailing-boat shall arrive.

As she stood on the beach, gazing out into the darkness, she began already to compose the letter by which she should make known to her father the terrible catastrophe, and worded the telegram, with that curious anxiety that creeps in even at moments of the most heart-broken anguish and grief, to keep the communication within the sixpenny limit. She was leaning against one of the boats, when she heard a step coming down the shingle; and a voice, certainly not Mrs Rockett's or that of any inhabitant of Scar, said: 'I am afraid you are anxious about your brothers and the boat not coming in; but there is really no cause for uneasiness, and I could have told you when they started this morning that they might be late in coming home, as the wind was veering even then. I have been out myself all night, tacking and tacking to get in; but there's not a bit of danger; the men know every inch of the coast, and the sea is like a duckpond; and they'll take every care of the children, never fear.'

I do not suppose that Mr Ludlow knew any more about the matter than the Scar men, who had done their best to reassure her. Indeed, I expect, he knew a good deal less; but somehow there was something comforting in his voice; and it did not give the impression that he was trying to humour her and make the best of a bad business, as it did with the other men, who, she fancied—and perhaps truly—would have said the same to her if they had known that the 'Petrel' was in grievous peril. 'There! don'tee trouble, Missy; there ain't nothing to be skeered on—bless your little heart!'

Nor did he try to persuade her to go home, and urge the uselessness of straining her eyes through the darkness, as Mrs Rockett did. 'Twon't do 'em no good, poor dears. You're not taking bit nor sup since dinner;' or, 'A watched pot never boils; they'll not come any the sooner for your looking.'

He took it for granted she would stop on the beach till the boat came in—an event which he treated not only as a certainty but a very speedy certainty; but he proposed that she should wrap herself in a warm plaid he had with him, as even on a night early in August the air is chill, and watching and waiting are not warming occupations.

'If you don't mind me having a pipe,' he said, 'and you wrap yourself in that plaid and sit down under that boat, we shall be the first to see the "Petrel" come in.'

I do not know whether it was the warmth of the plaid or the tobacco smoke that brought back in a consolatory way to her mind father's one pipe, the last thing at night, which he allowed himself as a little bit of comfort after the day's work was done; or it might have been the confidence her companion evidently felt that there was no danger to be apprehended; but Sage found herself talking quite cheerfully, and making plans for to-morrow, when no doleful sixpenny telegrams would have to be despatched, or heart-rending letters indited; and she was quite startled when a shout from the beach above announced that the 'Petrel' had been descried by eyes more used to penetrate the darkness; and she found that her thoughts had actually wandered far away from the subject which, before Mr Ludlow joined her, had seemed to absorb every sense and feeling. But she forgot all about her companion directly the boat's keel grated on the stones; for the next minute she had hold of all the four children at once, all safe and sound, all clinging hold of her, and chattering at once, and tumbling over one another, and interrupting one another in their anxiety to tell her of their adventures; and all too hungry and excited to remember what her feelings must have been, waiting for them on the dark beach.

She thought no more of her new friend till she had fed and warmed and listened to the children and got them all safe in bed, and then the plaid lying on the floor recalled him to her mind. It bore unmistakable marks of having been dragged up from the beach; and as she shook the sand and pebbles out of it and folded it up, she felt how ill-mannered and ungrateful she must have seemed not even to have said 'Good-night.'

CHAPTER IV.

Not chance of birth or place has made us friends,
Being oftentimes of different tongues and nations,
But the endeavour for the self-same ends,
With the same hopes and fears and aspirations.
LONGFELLOW.

After this very informal introduction, the acquaintance between Sage and Owen Ludlow ripened rapidly, till it reached what, I think, might almost be dignified by the name of friendship. But friendship has such different meanings to different minds, being to many people a very poor, cold-blooded, formal, convenient sort of concern, with no obligations, and few advantages, demanding no sacrifices, capable of being dropped at any moment without a pang of regret, or resumed when convenient without any perceptible feeling of pleasure. And to others it means something infinitely rich and pure and unselfish and noble, lasting till death and beyond it, patient, sympathetic, and enduring. And again some mix it up and confound it with love, and these would smile incredulously at the idea of friendship between a girl and a man, even a man with gray hair like Owen Ludlow and with fifty years behind him, with perhaps enough romance in them to last the threescore years and ten; and these will recognise the meeting on the beach as

the beginning of the love passages which occur in most stories in fiction or real life, as they will no doubt in this.

I almost wish, indeed, that it were so, for I think the course of true love might have run very smoothly and sunnily at little Scar, and Sage have been spared some very tempestuous passages in her young life; and Ludlow might have found a pleasant, mild, autumnal happiness in a young wife.

How beautiful some of the autumn days are, with the sun shining on the many-tinted foliage, and the frosty dew in the meadows, and the calm fall of the leaves from the branches on the golden heaps on the ground! and I think Ludlow's love for Sage might have been as sweet and peaceful and fair. But to one who has known the beauty of spring with its pure, sweet, budding loveliness, with the tender green and the soft young flowers, and the love-songs of the birds, autumn's beauty never seems perfect.

And do not you know, reader, the difference between the scent of the autumn violets you pick from among the dead leaves, while a bright-eyed robin eyes you silently from the branch above; and those in the spring, that peep out under the bare hedges with such a small flower that you can hardly believe all the fragrance comes from that little scrap of blue, telling you of winter being over, and spring and hope and love and the singing of birds come?

Well, anyhow, I do not think Owen Ludlow ever could have loved any one again as he did Katharine in the spring-time of his life; and I do not think anything short of that would have been worthy to offer to Sage; so it was very fortunate that such a thing never entered the head of either of them. But when, in after-times, they went back to the beginning of their friendship, they always dated it from that night, when, I suppose, the sympathy which is the soul of friendship flashed from one heart to the other.

The next morning, while the Merridews were at breakfast—rather a late breakfast, from having been up so late the night before—Mr Ludlow came to the door with easel and all the paraphernalia for sketching over his shoulder, and looked in at the little party gathered round the two uneven tables with such a friendly eye, that Sage forgot the elaborate apologies she had prepared for her rudeness of the night before.

'Well,' he said, 'you don't look any the worse for your adventures. But I don't expect you will be off trawling again to-day, so I want you all to come up and have tea with me.—I want to show you my sketches about here,' he said to Sage, who had told him last night of her ineffectual attempts in the same direction, not realising that he was 'the painter gentleman as lived up to Scar Cliff Farm and made pitchers,' of whom Mrs Rockett had told her a good deal.

The boys looked a little aghast at this sudden return to civilised life, and at having a jolly fine afternoon and evening spoilt while they sat up in their Sunday suits and ate thin bread and butter—or, anyhow, turned down their trousers, which at Scar were chronically tucked up to the knee—and put on clean collars; and Dennis gave a kick of much meaning under the table, nearly

succeeding in upsetting that somewhat rickety article.

Owen Ludlow rightly interpreted this demonstration, not having lost his sympathy with boys, as some men do almost before they have left school themselves.

'You had better come in all your oldest clothes,' he said, 'for they're clearing out a barn up there, and there are a heap of rats, if you like to have a hand in their destruction.'

Are there any boys in the world who do not like a rat-hunt, or fancy they should, if they had the chance?

Dennis, Nigel, and Will would have rather died than confess that their exploits in this direction had been confined to the pursuit of a mouse in the back kitchen at home; and Dennis inquired knowingly if they had any good dogs up at the farm, and proposed to borrow Mrs Rockett's dog Joe, which was as sharp as a needle, 'and well bred too,' Dennis hazarded, not knowing, as Mr Ludlow may have done, its mongrel pedigree.

'So we really met before last night,' Mr Ludlow said. 'I thought your voice was familiar to me. I have such a memory for voices, even more than for faces, and I was trying last night to fit your voice to some face I knew, and felt quite puzzled.'

'And I did not know till I had got home that you were Mr Ludlow; and Mrs Rockett said it must have been you. I don't think if I had known who it was, I should have told you about my miserable little sketches. You must have laughed at me.'

'No; that I didn't. I don't think one artist ever laughs at another; and it is so pleasant to meet any one who understands; and I came this morning on purpose to ask if you would like to come and sketch that jolly, old Scar Point. I've painted the old fellow at all times and seasons—in sunshine and shadow, storm and calm, winter and summer; and there's always something fresh to be got out of him. And, do you know? every one sees something different in him. I got quite a revelation from just a glimpse at a pencil sketch a young lady was making one day on half a sheet of note-paper. I worked for a fortnight from that idea, though I fancy she tore up the attempt in despair before she went back to Shingle; and she was voluble in her apologies for her failure, when I asked to look at it. There's such a lot of vanity mixed up in that self-depreciation!—I came here five years ago with my knapsack on my back just for a night, and I have stopped here off and on ever since. My friends harangue me on the folly of my conduct; and sometimes I return to the haunts of men and try to forget him. But the first windy night, when the wind comes with a burst and a rattle against my windows, though I may be in the most congenial company in the world, I begin to think of the spray leaping up against his rugged face, and the moonlight through the hurrying clouds playing hide-and-seek on his rough sides and noble old head. And the sunshine serves me the same trick, and allures me away from the most literary and artistic company; and I am sick for the sight of the red and gray and slate and orange that the sun brings out on him, and the green seaweed on the rocks at his feet in the silver sea,

and his cap of golden gorse against the blue sky.—Come along, little girl, and see what you can make of him.

'Mayn't I watch how you do it?'

'No; that ends in nothing. It's like the conjurers, don't you know? who always begin their entertainment by pretending to show their audience how to do a trick. It is so simple; you have only to do as he does—just to twist up a cone of paper and shake it, and the paper flowers come dropping out, pink, blue, and green all over the place. I don't mean to say that there's any magic or even sleight-of-hand in my performances; but it's like watching conjuring to watch any one else painting, only in this case the conjurer can't instead of won't show you how he does it.'

Owen Ludlow, from living so much alone, had fallen into a way of soliloquising; and in the early days of his friendship with Sage their conversations were very one-sided; and he went wandering on a great deal more to himself than to her, going sometimes so far away from the little, grave-faced maiden at his side, that her eyes would grow round and large with bewilderment; and he would come back with a start to amused consciousness of the incongruity between his talk and its auditor.

And sometimes he would make her talk and describe all the events of her life—they were not very many, to be sure—and tell him of Dr Merridew and the hero that the shabby, hard-worked, little doctor appeared in the eyes of his young daughter; and of the life taken up with trifles, as most lives are, and full of small homely details, which, described by a loving tongue, made up a picture like a Dutch interior, which is full of charm to an appreciative eye, and yet nothing more than you can see any day in any cottage kitchen in Holland.

'You are not a bit like Kitty or the boys,' he said once, when she had been describing some episode of home-life, and he had been watching the small, delicate face lighting up with expression into a beauty which it did not really possess of itself. Kitty and the boys were all of one type, round-faced, with soft apple-colouring on their cheeks; and brown, wide-apart eyes under straight brows, that easily fell into a frown; and heavy hair without any wave or curl, shading in Kitty's case to red at the tips.

Sage's eyes were gray, with dark rings in them, and dark curled lashes; and her hair waved and curled wherever it could escape from its plaits; and her little pointed chin gave quite a different character to her face.

'I am like my mother,' she answered.

'And the others like your father, I suppose?'

'No; Nigel is a little like father, but not much. It is more in his manner than his face. No; they are like mother.'

'I don't quite understand, then,' he said, 'why you are not more alike.'

She laughed at his mystification. 'Oh,' she said, 'that is because *my* mother and mother are different people.' And then she told him of 'my mother,' and of her early death, and of the baby girl left to the struggling, young doctor.

'He says I was his only comfort. He doesn't often talk of those days; but when he does, he says that he doesn't think he could ever have got

over his grief when my mother went if it had not been for me. I was a horrid, fretty, little thing; but he always had me in his room at night, and sometimes he would walk up and down with me all night.—Fancy that, when he was working hard all day! He says I was a sort of counter-irritant. It's nice to have done him good, even though it was only like a mustard plaster or a blister. He had all his meals with a foot on the rocker of my cradle; and even now he says sometimes he feels after it with his foot at dinner unconsciously; and he got so used to making up medicine with me under his arm, that he only uses one hand now for things that he could do better with two.'

How different people are! Owen Ludlow thought as he listened, certainly what is one man's meat is another man's poison. 'How old are you, Sage?'

'Twenty, last May.'

'Then it was in May your mother died?'

'Yes; and they had only been married a little over a year, in the April of the year before. Father says it was such a beautiful year—there never has been one like it since. They were so poor, they could not afford to go into the country for any time; but they would go out for a day just a little way out of London; and he says there never have been such beautiful summer days as these were that year—even in Dalston it was lovely.'

'Yes,' Owen Ludlow said; 'it was my beautiful year too, little Sage. There never has been, never can be such another! How strange that two lives should have run so parallel as your father's and mine, for we must have been married the same month, and had the same length of perfect happiness allowed us.'

It was the first time he had spoken of his marriage, though he had told her many stories of his life at home and abroad before and since that time; and she listened with that sympathetic silence that is more conducive to further confidences than any expressions of interest or pity. He told her more about Katharine than he had ever told any one, bringing out one tender memory after another, over which those twenty years seemed hardly to have scattered any of time's dust, or to have faded the colours or blurred the delicate outlines.

'And you had not even a poor, little, fretting baby to be a comfort to you!' she said pitifully.

'Yes,' he said; 'even in that point your father's life and mine ran side by side; there was a little baby girl; but I'—

He stopped, with a sudden realisation of how he had cast away what might have been, what Dr Merridew had indeed found, his greatest comfort. That baby, whom he had found so uninteresting, and such an oppressive burden, would now have been a grown-up girl like this one, who sat listening with such tenderly sympathetic eyes. She might have been just such another gentle, sweet, little girl, with perhaps the likeness to her mother, the very idea of which he had scouted as applied to the baby. She might have had the same unassuming enthusiasm for art as Sage, making her as congenial and sympathetic a companion. She might have had the same loving admiration for him that Sage had for her father.

'But you lost her,' Sage softly ended the unfinished sentence.

'Yes, I lost her,' he answered, with his voice full of a deep regret, which brought sudden tears into Sage's eyes, thinking of a little grave.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

THERE are two police forces in Ireland—the Dublin Metropolitan Police, and the Royal Irish Constabulary. The former is confined altogether to Dublin and the surrounding townships, and is not unlike the city police of some of the large English towns. It has no connection with the 'R. I. C.,' as the Royal Irish Constabulary is popularly called; and the latter may be nearly altogether regarded as a rural force, the vast majority of its members being stationed in the small towns and villages—nay, even in many places where there are few or no houses at all. This police force has now been in existence for nearly seventy years; but of course great changes have taken place in it since its first establishment. It may be said to have been put on a permanent basis in the year 1837, when the existing police forces of the four provinces—till then separate and distinct—were united under one head and central control. Since then, that force has been the chief engine for maintaining the civil government of Ireland; and its duties have increased every year as new laws have been made for the better government of that country; and it now performs many duties which at its first establishment were carried out by the bailiffs, coastguards, excise officers, or by the revenue police. For instance, the R. I. C. is now employed in taking the census every tenth year—in collecting the agricultural statistics annually—in issuing and collecting voting-papers for the poor-law guardians. The inspection of weights and measures and food and drugs is now performed by members of the Force in country districts. The distribution of money, &c., for the relief of the poverty-stricken quarters in Ireland was mainly undertaken by them also. Nay, one of the last occupations which the Constabulary were set to do by the late Government was the task of distributing well-bred 'roosters' amongst the poor farmers in the backward parts of the country; and the police were enjoined not to bestow their 'charges' among the destined receivers till the latter annihilated the native cockerel.

The R. I. C. numbers at present nearly thirteen thousand strong; in peaceful times, this number is reduced to about twelve thousand. The Force is semi-military and semi-police, being equipped and drilled to a great extent in military fashion; while its duties are nearly altogether of a civil nature nowadays—though in emergencies, bodies of police may be called upon to act like portions of a regiment of soldiers. The police are armed with the Snider rifle and bayonet, and with ball-cartridge and buckshot for grave emergencies: whilst their more usual, but very often as effective weapon is the baton or truncheon. Their uniform is somewhat similar to that of the rifle regiments—dark tunic and trousers, belt and helmet or forage cap. The rank and file are all, with rare exceptions, natives of Ireland—though it is not necessary that they should be so—and are chiefly recruited from the farming class. The

majority of the officers, too, are Irishmen; but there is a fair sprinkling of Englishmen amongst them. A candidate for the R. I. C. must be of respectable parents and character—between nineteen and twenty-five years of age—not less than five feet nine inches in height, with corresponding chest measurement. He must not only be unmarried when entering the Force, but must wait for seven years before he can be allowed to marry. He must be able to read and write fairly well, and have some knowledge of arithmetic. On passing the literary and physical examination in his native county, he is put on the list of eligible candidates; and when his time comes, he is called up for training to the R. I. C. Depot in the Phoenix Park, near Dublin. Here he is drilled like a soldier, and schooled in police duties for about six months, at the termination of which he is sent out to some county to do his duty as a fully-fledged policeman. No man is allowed to serve in a county where he has any relatives or connections.

The arrangements of the Irish police differ from those of the English county police forces. Each English county has a special force of its own, unconnected with those of other counties. Ireland outside Dublin is kept in order by only one police force, and its officers and men are being constantly transferred from one county to another as the public service requires. The chief of the R. I. C. is called the Inspector-general, and there are immediately under him one Deputy and two Assistant-inspectors general, all of whom reside permanently in Dublin, where their headquarters are at the Castle. Next comes the Depot Force, at the head of which is the Commandant, and under him are an Adjutant, Barrack-master, Schoolmaster, and Surgeon. There is also a Riding-master for the instruction of the mounted portion of the Force. All these belong to the 'Staff.' There is also a Bandmaster and an excellent band, which was second to none in Ireland some years ago. At the Depot there are about two hundred and fifty men permanently stationed, forming the 'Reserve,' and about forty of these are mounted. Besides this force, there are generally about two hundred recruits there up for training. Then there are thirty-six County Inspectors, each of whom has charge of a county, or of half of the largest counties, and resides in the most central, and generally the chief town of his county. He is responsible to the Inspector-general for the discipline and efficiency of the force under his control, and to the Government for the state of his county. The county is divided according to its size into a number of portions called districts, each of which is under the charge of a District Inspector, residing in the most convenient station of his district, for the state of which he is accountable to the County Inspector, and having under his command about fifty men, scattered through the district in small parties. Each district is again subdivided into subdistricts, over each of which is stationed a Head-constable or Sergeant, in charge of from four to six or more men, according to the size and state of his 'bailiwick.' These small parties live in 'barracks,' centrally situated—generally in obscure villages, sometimes on bleak moors or mountains or such-like remote places. Each party has to look after the peace of its subdistrict, which contains all that

portion of country comprised within a circle having a circumference of about twenty to thirty miles, of which the barracks may be regarded as the centre. Besides these barracks, there are in disaffected parts of the country 'huts' inhabited by police for the special protection of persons who have for some reason rendered themselves obnoxious to their neighbours, and on whose persons or property outrages are likely to be committed. It is the duty of such police-parties to possess a good local knowledge of all the persons and places in their neighbourhood, so as to be ready to act on that knowledge at any time; they must also be acquainted with their duties as set forth in Acts of Parliament, and in rules and regulations issued from time to time from headquarters for their guidance.

The Head-constable or sergeant in charge of a party is responsible for the drill, discipline, and general efficiency of the constables under him, and also for the peace of his subdistrict. He has constantly to furnish returns and reports to his District Inspector. He has also to keep the station records and books; and as these 'office' duties are numerous and occasionally somewhat intricate, he must be possessed of some literary ability. He has also to arrange for the outdoor work of his party and to see that it is properly done. He must be capable of thinking and acting for himself in cases of emergency, when time does not admit of communicating with and receiving orders from his superiors. He must immediately visit the scene of an outrage, make inquiries, and report without delay to the District Inspector.

The first duty learned by the constable—the lowest grade of the Force—is obedience in carrying out the orders of his superiors; but, like his sergeant, he is often in a position in which he has no one from whom to receive orders, and so must act on his own responsibility. He must keep himself clean and smart in appearance; his arms and accoutrements must be always serviceable and in good order; and he must be ever ready to turn out for a sudden call of duty. He has to do his share of patrolling, execute warrants, serve summonses, attend on and carry out the orders of the magistrates, and, in short, he has to perform all the ordinary duties of a policeman anywhere.

The thorough local knowledge which a party should possess, and on which great stress is laid in selecting a good policeman, is chiefly gained by constant patrolling through the whole of a subdistrict. There are never fewer than two policemen on a patrol, and the durations and duties of patrols vary much according to those particular parts of Ireland where they are performed. The party must make themselves fully acquainted with all that is happening and going to happen in their neighbourhood; and day patrols have a good opportunity of obtaining this knowledge by mixing and conversing—nay, even 'gossiping'—with the people whom they chance to meet. Night patrols generally confine themselves to watching suspected characters and localities, and protecting obnoxious persons; and have frequently to remain in ambush in the open air for many hours, perhaps in the depth of winter, exposed to the fury of the elements in an inclement climate. Sometimes they may be sheltered

from rain and wind by a hedge, haystack, or fence—commonly called a 'ditch' in Ireland—and often they have no shelter. There are occasions, too, when such patrols have to be performed at considerable distances from the barracks, and sometimes over bogs or moors or across mountains; so that in bad weather, which is the rule rather than the exception in Ireland, they are productive of great hardship—in many cases of loss of health, and in not a few instances death has resulted from such exposure. Besides this important duty of patrolling, which averages from four to six hours daily, 'beat' duty has to be performed in towns and large villages in a manner similar to the beat duty in English towns, where the class of offences is somewhat alike.

Whenever fairs or large markets are held in towns, the police have to attend in force, to prevent rows and faction fights, which latter are now, however, dying out, though they used to be common occurrences after fairs not many years ago. Between the years 1830 and 1840 sudden tumults and daring outrages occurred in Ireland, especially in connection with the payment of tithes, and on several occasions the constabulary were brought into violent contact with the people, and very often with melancholy results to both parties. In December 1831 an officer and thirty-six men, who were protecting a process-server, were attacked in a narrow defile by the country-people, and nearly half the protecting force with their officer were murdered on the spot, the survivors narrowly escaping with their lives. Shooting at the police was not an uncommon occurrence even in recent years. In a remote part of Ireland a school Inspector was examining a class of children in Scripture, and coming to the story of Moses he asked: 'Why did Moses flee from Egypt?' None of the class could answer till he came to a little fellow at the end, who suddenly seemed struck with a brilliant idea, and piped out: 'Cos he shot a peeler, sir!' This story shows how the 'young idea' identified Moses with the flying Fenian, and the Egyptian taskmaster with the 'peeler.'

The pay of a constable in the R. I. C. varies from about a pound to twenty-seven shillings and sixpence a week, according to the number of years he has served. His pay increases on promotion; and if he attains to the rank of Head-constable, he receives about two pounds a week. There are also various allowances which amount to something in the year. An unmarried constable 'messes' with the rest of his unmarried comrades, and this 'messing' costs him about thirty-five shillings a month; and as there is, practically speaking, very little, if any, other necessary expenditure, he can, if thriftily inclined, save what is to him a considerable sum after some years' service.

The officers of the Irish constabulary are appointed partly by competition and partly by the promotion of a limited number of head-constables from the ranks. Every year the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland nominates about six gentlemen for each vacancy, and the literary examination for the vacant appointments is conducted by the Civil Service Commissioners. The candidates must be unmarried, between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-six, and over five feet six inches in height. The successful candidates

are sent to the *Depôt* for training in drill and police duties generally; and after half a year there, or sometimes more, they must pass a further examination before being sent down to the country to take charge of a district. Their pay and allowances then amount to about £250 per annum, and gradually rise till after about twenty years' service, when the income of a District Inspector is about £450. His promotion to the rank of County Inspector is of course accompanied by a further increase in pay.

The duties of a District Inspector are many and various, and he has no easy time in a disturbed district. He must inspect all the stations in his district once every month in the daytime, and sometimes at night. He must attend every petty sessions held in his district, where he has the conduct of all the most important criminal cases. He must visit immediately the scene of any outrage, no matter how trivial, occurring in his district: he must be on the alert with regard to occurrences likely to disturb the peace, and be ready to afford his superiors the fullest information on every matter connected with his district. He must take command of parties of his men when engaged in preserving order at races, fairs, and meetings of large numbers of people; and he has sometimes, at a moment's notice, to proceed in charge of a detachment of men to a distant part of the country, where he may be absent for weeks, or even months, as the circumstances of the case may require. He has also a fair average amount of office-work to perform daily.

Another duty that he is enjoined to perform is perhaps the most difficult of all—to 'keep in touch' with all the local magistrates. As these latter include 'all sorts and conditions' of men, who occasionally differ from one another on very trivial points, and some of whom are very often inclined to differ with the police, it is no easy task for a police-officer—especially if he has a temper—to avoid falling foul of some of 'their worships' at the local bench or elsewhere. Happy is the 'D. I.' who is able to keep on the even tenor of his way without coming into collision with any of these rustic magnates.

Though there are some unpleasant drawbacks in the life of a police-officer in Ireland, on the whole his life is pleasant, and no wonder that there are so many applications for nominations for the vacancies. He can always take part in any of the sports of the neighbourhood; and indeed in a quiet district, except for occasional routine duties and a limited income, he is like a local country gentleman. Some of them have their lines cast in very pleasant places—some in just the reverse; but there is always this consolation for the latter—that they are not likely to be long stationed in a disagreeable locality. As a rule, a police-officer is allowed to remain at a station for about five years—sometimes longer, sometimes shorter; and then, if they wish it, or if the exigences of the public service require, they may pack up their traps and seek 'fresh woods and pastures new.'

The Royal Irish Constabulary have a splendid record. In the trying times of their early establishment they encountered many difficulties nobly and successfully, and gradually won their way

into the public esteem. Their reputation is not confined to Ireland alone. Their fame has reached those regions wherever the 'Union-jack' flies, and wherever the English language is spoken. Over and over again have Irish constables, by special request, gone out to England's colonies to instruct the native police forces there, where they have risen to positions of dignity and trust, and have nobly maintained the credit of their old Force at home.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;
A Soldier and a Gentleman; &c.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—THREE INTERVIEWS.

GEORGE snatched a morsel of lunch at the bar of the Refreshment Room on his arrival at the London terminus, and then he drove to his father's at Rutland Gate. There had been a luncheon party, and the guests were driving away as George drove up. It struck three o'clock as he entered his father's house with beating heart.

'What's up, my lad?' asked Suffield, meeting his son in the hall, and glancing at the portmanteaus being handed down from the roof of the cab.

'Come, father,' said George, 'and let us talk quick.—Let these traps be left in the hall,' he said to the wondering footman: 'I don't expect to sleep here to-night.'

His father led the way into the library, and turned, saying, 'Well, my lad?'

'Let us sit down, father, together,' said George, setting his handbag on the table and taking a seat. 'I have discovered something that has made it necessary I should come to see you at once.'

'Oh,' said his father, 'you have found something at last! I thought there should be something more than the plans for Daniel to run off with.—But go on.'

'I have to confess, father, that I have been speculating largely in cotton.'

'Ha! You have!'

'I wanted to make our firm the biggest of its kind, and I wanted to make a good provision for the time when I might marry Bell.'

'You did evil, my son, and expected good to come.'

'I had read of a baker in France that developed an enormous business, because he determined not to deal with flour-agents: he imported all the flour and grain he could use, and his business grew till he had a whole fleet of ships owned by himself at work for him. "Now," I thought, "that's what we should do! We ought to import all our own cotton." I began small efforts in buying very early, though much did not happen till the beginning of the season in September. But as soon almost as I knew him, that Daniel had tempted me with his knowledge of Indian cotton, and led me on.'

Suffield groaned. 'The black man,' he murmured, 'led me on! It's an excuse, lad, as old as Adam!'

'Am I trying to excuse myself?' said George. 'I don't wish to, father. I am responsible and to blame. I only meant to show you how it all came about. Daniel was indeed very clever. He

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knew all the varieties of Indian cotton, and he had picked up with a Parsee who dealt in them. —You remember Tanderjee?

'Another black man!' groaned his father. 'I wouldn't trust one o' them!'

'Tanderjee knew all about the shipments and the agents of Bombay, and between them, Daniel and he made one or two very profitable movements. But they had very little money.'

'Daniel, I suppose, would have had none at all if it hadn't been for Uncle Harry?'

'No. So Tanderjee came to me with a proposal, first, that I should help him with money and share in his profits, and afterwards, that I should advance money on consignments at a reduced price to enable them to be shipped.'

'I see it all! I see it all! It has been done before, my lad. A kind of confidence trick. They show you good samples, and get you to advance good money, and then they deliver rubbish!—Go on, my lad.'

'I advanced three-fourths once or twice. There seemed very little risk in that, you know, father. Indian cotton has for a good while shown a better average of quality than American, and it is so well packed that there is hardly any fear of damage or loss by fire or water.'

'Go on.'

'But the last time he asked me to give him a cheque, instead of making the common arrangement to be drawn upon.'

'Confidence trick again!'

'Yesterday, I was told that the first half of the consignment had arrived in dock,' George doggedly continued, 'and on examination proved not worth more than twopence a pound.'

'What had you paid for it?'

'Fivepence.'

'And for how much did you give him a cheque?'

'Seven thousand five hundred.—Now I find Tanderjee has disappeared as well as Daniel.'

'Oh, ho! He's gone, too, is he? Gone together—are they?'

'I suspect so—and gone, I should think, to Bombay. Where else should they have gone with the designs for the patent machines?'

'I've been thinking,' said his father, 'they might have been taken straight to Germany for the machines to be manufactured at once and sent on to Bombay; but there's no doubt it's Bombay the whole business is meant for.—But, now, my lad, I suppose you've come proposing to do something?'

'Find how they have gone, and follow them! That's what I propose to do.'

'Follow them yourself? Where's the good of that?'

'Not so much for the sake of the money Tanderjee has gone off with—though that's a good deal!—as because of the plans. As you have yourself said, father, they might take them to an engineer at once. However, I've been such a fool, I'm ready to defer to your opinion of what I should do.—But I've something else I must tell you first, father,' continued George with evident reluctance. 'I'm engaged now in cotton transactions along with Gorgonio.'

'What? In that cornering game of his that I've heard of?'

'Yes, father. He has no money; and I have

become responsible for the payment of differences and so on.'

'You have?—You scamp, George! You incorrigible scamp! To think that son o' mine should ever have a hand in the wickedest kind o' thing that's done in business!' He gazed at his son with an anger and sternness of demeanour the like of which his son had never seen before.

'Wickedest thing in business, father? How so?'

'Hast thought o' th' other men ruined when a corner succeeds?—o' th' mills stopped, or put on half-time, wi' forcing up prices?'

'No. I hadn't thought of these things.'

'Then,' said his father, 'it's time thou did, lad! Thou'dst better get out o' that corner at once!'

'I can't, father—until the end of the month: the transactions are open till the 31st of January!'

'Get out at once, I tell tha!—and save thy character wi' all honest men!'

'But just think what will happen! Prices will go down with a rush, and we shall lose over one hundred thousand pounds!'

'A hundred thousand! Good heavens!—But I might ha' guessed a man cannot back a cotton corner all by himself for less! But it must be done, lad, to save thy character and my own! I was an owd fool to trust tha wi' so much!—But thou hast run thy rig, and now thou'dst better go thy ways!—Thy mother and I'll ha' to go back to work and see what we can do!'

The father rose, stood with his back to the fireplace, and gazed with absent mind at the haughty lords of Padiham that glared on him from the opposite wall. The young man was thoroughly humbled. He beat his foot on the carpet, and his lip quivered.

'Don't speak to me like that, father!' said he. 'I've made a tremendous mistake, but I meant no harm!'

'I believe they a' say that, lad!—But go thy ways!'

'Here's a hundred pounds I drew to-day, father,' said George, putting his purse on the table.—'to go after those black men with; don't you want me to take that? Don't you want me to go?'

'Take it; take it. A little more or less don't matter. Take it, and do as tha likes wi' it!—and go where tha likes!'

'Don't be so hard, father,' said George. 'Don't take my hope away! The bitterest thing to me is that if I don't save this, I'll have lost money that you and mother have worked hard to win! Bid me go for your sake, father! And don't burst the corner up at once, father! It will cripple your business!'

'Thou'dst best leave thy corner and thy Gorgonio to me, lad! And go and make what thou can o' thy black men!'

'I don't care for myself!' pleaded George. 'I only want to show that I can do something!—that I am fit to be trusted!' And the young man laid his face on his arm and sobbed.

'There, lad, there!' said his father, laying his hand on his son's shoulder and giving him an affectionate grip, while his lip trembled. 'Let's say no more, but make what we can o't. When a' is said and done, thou'rt my own son,

and my only one, and what's mine is thine! Come, lad, come! Let's shake hands!' And they shook hands, while the father said: 'Thou'rt not a bad lad, but thou'rt a fool, George!'

At that moment Mrs Suffield entered, and exclaimed to George: 'What's all this? I suppose your mother is of no account in the house now?'

'What dost think, Joan?' said Suffield. 'Here's our George been trying to make a cotton corner!'

'Well, and what if he has, my dear?' said his wife.

'Ah! What if he has? And what if he loses his character there, and all th' brass into th' bargain?'

'No! never!' exclaimed George's mother, kissing him. 'He's not such a bad lad!'

'Father will tell you all about it, mother,' said George seriously. 'I must run to see Isabel.'

As he went out, a telegram was handed to him. It was from his bankers. It declared that twelve of the notes whose numbers had been sent had been handed into the Bank of England and exchanged for a draft upon the Oriental Bank, Bombay, on December 27th, by a dark man who looked like a native of India.

'Daniel or Tanderjee,' said George; and returned to put the telegram into his father's hands.

Isabel sat waiting for him in a condition of great agitation. His morning telegram had assigned no reason for the hasty journey and the urgent request for an interview; so she wondered if by any means, occult or other, he had learned or divined her desire to be free of her engagement to him. When he was announced she felt herself turn pale, and when he entered and pressed her hand, she trembled so violently that George could not but note it.

'Are you ill, Bell?' he asked with concern.

'No, George,' she answered. 'But your sudden descent upon me has startled me. Is there—is there,' she asked humbly—so humbly that George was surprised at the new tone in her—'any special reason for this sudden visit?—You'll have some tea?' She rose to ring the bell—and to release her hand from his.

'I must not stay, Bell. I have come to tell you something of great consequence, and then I must be off. I have been a great fool, Bell.' (Isabel clasped her hands, and trembled afresh.) 'I have speculated in cotton very seriously; and that black Daniel and another black man have gone off—to India, I believe—with money and with other things that are of such importance that if I don't recover them—what with these and another mistake of mine—the firm will be crippled, if not ruined!'

'Oh, my poor George!' she cried. 'Take my money!—do! And make things right with it!'

'My dear Bell!' he exclaimed, rising, 'I couldn't apply a penny of your money to mend the trouble I've made by my own folly!'

'Sit down, George dear,' said she, 'and let us talk of this quietly.'

'There is no time for talk, my dear Bell!'

said George. 'My father will tell you all about it.'

'But won't you take my money?' said she almost piteously. 'The money was designed by Uncle Harry for the benefit of the family, I am sure, if the family ever needed it. He was always talking to me of our family coming first. You will take the money—won't you? I can write a cheque at once!'

'Bell, my dear, you are generosity—you are goodness itself!—but I will not touch a penny of your money! I am going to succeed, or fail, by myself in this, Bell! I want to show my father that if I make a blunder, I can try my best to repair it! And I am going to find those black villains, even if I should have to go to the other side of the world!—Do you know Ainsworth's address, Bell?'

'Mr Ainsworth's address?' echoed Isabel, beset anew with an unaccountable alarm.

'I want to ask him about that letter he wrote to me: about the condition in which he saw Daniel. I was an ungrateful fool. I believe if I had paid attention to what he wrote me, I should have been saved this trouble with Daniel!—Do you know, Bell, why I tore his letter up? I was jealous of him, Bell!'

Isabel had heard him confess almost as much before, but not so explicitly. It struck her now as if she had heard it for the first time: such a strange feeling of guilt was hanging about her heart.

'No!' she said, scarce knowing what she said, and clasping her hands to restrain herself. 'Surely not!'

'I was.—Now, give me his address, if you know it, and let me go.'

Isabel wrote the address with trembling fingers, and handed it to him, saying: 'It is the barest chance that you will find him in; though he is as likely to be at home now as at any time.—And then you are going to pursue those men. I hope you will succeed in your quest, George!—I do, indeed!' She could find nothing better—nothing more charged with feeling—than that to say: she could not belie herself.

George looked tenderly on her, and took her hand. 'Let me kiss you once, Bell, before I go.'

When he was gone, she sat down in a passion of repugnance of herself, and wrote a few lines to Ainsworth:

'My dear—George has been here. He's in great trouble. I could say nothing to him of what is in our minds. He asked me for your address. You have seen him, I hope. We had better not meet again till this is past. It is more than I can endure. I cannot humiliate myself in my own eyes. I love you, my dear; but I will not be base and snatch the pleasure of seeing you—when that pleasure makes me ashamed. Oh, let me do what I think is right and honest, and help me to do it.—Ever your own.'

Alan Ainsworth sat in his old lodgings in Woburn Place when he was surprised to hear 'Mr Suffield' announced, and amazed to see George walk in.

'I have to apologise to you, Ainsworth,' said George at once, 'for intruding on you. But I am in trouble and in haste—and I want to ask you particularly about what you wrote to me last

summer concerning that black rascal of mine, Daniel Trichinopoly.'

'Oh, you have at last found he is a rascal, then?' said Ainsworth.

'If I had listened to you, Ainsworth, that day you said you saw him in the new mill, or even later, when you wrote to me, I should have been spared the trouble. I behaved badly; I behaved like a cub; and I ask you to forgive me.'

'My dear fellow,' said Ainsworth, taking the proffered hand, 'I have nothing to forgive!—nothing!' He said that sincerely, but somewhat awkwardly; for he felt that on the whole George had much to forgive him.—'In what way, may I ask, has his rascality developed?'

George told him the story of his own folly and of Daniel's guile as briefly as he could.

'And now, I see,' said Ainsworth, 'you want to trace him?'

'To follow and catch him, please God!' said George fervently.

'Well, when I saw him,' said Ainsworth, 'he was just like one of those lascar fellows that are sailors or stokers on the Peninsular and Oriental steamers.—Was he anything of a sailor, do you know?'

'I should say, not a bit,' answered George.

'And now I think of it,' said Ainsworth, 'it must have been stoking he was dreaming of in his opium sleep. I remember perfectly—it made a great impression on me—the horror with which he talked of the fire!—the fire and the water!'

'A lascar stoker on an Indian boat?' exclaimed George. 'That's very likely. He'd think himself completely hid in that way beyond thought of detection.—But there's no time to be lost,' said he, rising.

Ainsworth insisted on accompanying him, and they went out together, Ainsworth longing to be frank and confess his love for Isabel, while he vainly felt how impossible it was to tell his companion such a thing then. They took a cab to Scotland Yard to find, or to hear of, the detective who had charge of Daniel's case. Scotland Yard had not yet discovered what had become of Daniel, and the two young men communicated their suspicion and its basis. The suspicion seemed to the official mind worth taking into account; and a detective was detailed to accompany them to the dock office of the Peninsular and Oriental Company. There, after much difficulty diving into the memory of the worried dock-agent—for he was eaten up with business, that day being the sailing day of the company—it was elicited that a lascar answering to Daniel's description, and bearing even Daniel's name, had sailed that very day at noon as a stoker in the *Travancore* in place of a defaulting lascar. Was the agent sure that was not a week ago? George asked. The agent was quite sure that none but return lascars sailed a week ago. A visit to the office of the company in Leadenhall Street added the strengthening fact that there had sailed as a second-class passenger for Bombay in the *Travancore* a Parsee, giving the name of Mookerjee.

So much success at setting out cheered George beyond measure, and he was all agog to be off in pursuit—though how a successful pursuit was to be devised he did not know, since the first port of call for the *Travancore* was Gibraltar. He had reckoned that, if the fugitives had sailed—

as they might have done—the week before, he might have caught them up by travelling overland by the mail-train to Brindisi.

'They have six hours' start of us!' exclaimed George, looking at his watch.

The detective who had accompanied them from Scotland Yard proposed that an authoritative telegram should be at once sent to the shipping agent at Gibraltar demanding the detention of one Daniel, a stoker on board of the *Travancore*; and that the other detective, who had taken charge of the case from the first, should journey with George, with warrants for the arrest of Daniel Trichinopoly and Mr Tanderjee. Then George bade 'good-bye' to Ainsworth, and went on to Rutland Gate alone.

Arrived there, he found Lord Clitheroe waiting to accompany him on whatever quest he might be going, with a portmanteau ready packed.

'I happened to look in,' said he, 'and your father told me about this business—I—he hastened to explain, in answer to a blush on George's face—'being almost one of the family. And so I made up my mind to go with you wherever you are going. It's not right for a man to go on a sport of that sort by himself.'

'It's awfully good of you,' said George gratefully, 'to think of coming.' And he related all he had discovered.

'The P. & O. boat calls at Gibraltar on Tuesday—does it not?' said Clitheroe. 'Rail at once to Marseilles, I would suggest—and then on by sea or by rail, as best we can. I think I can be of use to you on the route.'

George had a word or two with his father alone—while Phemy took the opportunity of pressing Clitheroe's hand, and murmuring, 'Aren't you a dear!' and then—with a basket of provision, which Mrs Suffield insisted they should take, because there was no time for dinner and her son had scarcely tasted food since morning—he and Lord Clitheroe drove away through darkness and fog to Charing Cross, to take the 8.15 mail-train, calling first at Scotland Yard for the detective who was to accompany them.

IN A CATHEDRAL CITY.

THROUGH a smiling land, in all its summer beauty, we reach the old cathedral city of Canterbury. From the moment in which the suburbs of London, with their endless rows of villas and patches of garden, were left behind, to that in which the lofty tower of the Cathedral came in sight, the journey has been one long succession of beautiful pictures. Pleasant valleys dotted with cattle browsing in the meadows; wooded hills with gray ivy-clad church towers peeping out here and there; hop-grounds, orchards, and corn-fields; deep cuttings of sandstone and chalk, busy towns, and picturesque villages, have followed one another swiftly. Through this pleasant country, Chaucer's pilgrims rode leisurely, more than six hundred years ago, on their way to the shrine of Thomas à Becket. Fresh towns have sprung up since then, and many of the places through which they passed have grown to six times the size they were then; but nature has not altered, and they could not have enjoyed its beauties more than

we have done. They entered Canterbury on the opposite side to that at which the traveller from Victoria alights.

Outside the station are modern houses that tell us it has outgrown its limit since those far-off times. Yet he who will may find enough traces of the old city as the pilgrims saw it. Here, for instance, not a stone's-throw from the station yard, is a part of the city wall, skirting the picturesque Dane John gardens. This wall, with many gates and towers and posterns, ran all round the city, making a thick and solid rampart. All the gates but one are gone, for the citizens of Canterbury love not what is old; much of the wall has been destroyed, and what remains has been built upon in some places and shut out from view in others; but here and there it can be seen on the northern side of the city.

Outside it stood the great monastery of St Augustine. It covered as much ground as the present cathedral and its precincts. Its abbots and priors held vast possessions, and claimed equal privilege with the sister establishment within the walls. In its church the first five Archbishops of Canterbury were buried; and until the death of Becket riveted all eyes on the cathedral, its shrines and relics were unrivalled. Of this historic place, only the outer gateway is to be seen. Until the beginning of the present century, there were the remains of a very lofty tower of beautiful workmanship, called St Ethelbert's Tower; but vandalism swept it away. Fire more than once destroyed the old monastic buildings; Henry VIII. scattered its monks and its treasures. What remained of it was by turns a fives-court, a public-house, and a brewery; so that it is little wonder that there is nothing left to-day but the gateway.

Strangely enough, while apathy, ignorance, and vandalism have united to raze to the ground this famous place, they have left untouched the church of St Martin. Perhaps its distance from the city may have had something to do with this, for it lies out beyond the monastery. But whatever the reason may be, modern pilgrims may thank a kindly fate for leaving them something genuinely old, and yet not a ruin. The church of St Martin, or at all events a part of it, was a Roman temple. It was made into a place of worship by the early Saxon Christians, and such it has remained ever since. The massive ivy-clad tower, the Roman, Norman, and Early English architecture, the ancient tomb in which the Saxon queen Bertha is said to have been buried, the wonderful font, the old brasses, the battered gravestones in the churchyard—one lingers over them all, lost in wonder, and is loth to leave them. Dean Stanley called this the Mother Church of England; and without doubt it would be hard to find its equal. To have seen this fine old building is to be well repaid for the journey.

There was another building outside the North-gate of the city in Chaucer's time, the Hospital of St John, and here it still stands, its magnificent oaken gateway black with age. But it is now in a busy thoroughfare, and the change from the bustle and noise of the street into the quiet secluded garden is very welcome. There is a fine old sixteenth-century kitchen to be seen here; and the little chapel is full of interest; but here,

again, the vandal has been at work, destroying parts and marring others.

Passing now into the city, we turn first to the cathedral. There are many spots about the close from which the outside of this splendid pile can be studied, notably from what is known as the Green Court. The only sounds that reach the ear are the cawing of the rooks in the elm-trees near at hand, and the strains of the organ within the building; and we can sit and sketch and dream as long as we like undisturbed. All the western part of the cathedral as it stands now, including the beautiful central tower, was built between the close of the fourteenth and the first quarter of the sixteenth centuries. All to the east of that is of even earlier date, having been built by William of Sens and William the Englishman; and this rests upon work still earlier, for the crypt was built by Lanfranc, on his becoming Archbishop of Canterbury.

Like the pilgrims of old, we enter the cathedral by the south porch, and find ourselves in the nave. From this we pass to the scene of Becket's martyrdom, and hear the story of that memorable deed, committed more than seven hundred years ago, that made Canterbury Cathedral famous for all time. Changes have taken place around this spot; but we need not hesitate to believe that it was here that the prelate turned to bay, and after a fierce struggle with his opponents, was struck down.

In the choir and north-east transept are tombs of famous archbishops, some curious wall-paintings, and the desk to which the Bible was once chained for whomsoever would to read. Close by is the vestry where the richer and more fortunate pilgrims were shown the Becket relics. Under the domed roof of the Trinity Chapel stood Becket's shrine. To this spot, from all parts of Christendom for many centuries, came kings, princes, nobles, rich burghers such as mine host of the 'Tabard' and his goodly company, to lay their oblations at the feet of the saint, to do penance for their sins, to say their paternosters, to get a glimpse of the richly-jewelled shrine, to wander as we do round the cathedral, and so home again, having seen enough to last them a lifetime. Whether they went up and down the steps leading to the chapel on their knees is extremely doubtful; considering the numbers who undertook this pilgrimage every year, the wear of the steps by their shoes is easily accounted for without putting forward any other reason.

Unfortunately for us, there is nothing to look at but a bare pavement; and it does seem a strange thing that in this age of restorations, no attempt has ever been made to restore Becket's shrine.

Next we see the tomb of Edward the Black Prince, with his surcoat, gauntlets, and shield hanging above it—a very notable monument. Then there is the splendid Warriors' Chapel, full of stately tombs; the ancient crypt, where once the bodies of Becket and the Black Prince were buried, and where the French Refugee Church is still shown. The Cloisters, the Chapter-House, the Dark Entry, the famous Norman Staircase in the precincts: the day is getting old before we can turn our backs upon the cathedral, and even then we have left much unseen.

The city is full of winding lanes and quaint

domestic architecture, at least three centuries old. In the High Street, old inns with sloping floors and lattice windows stand side by side with handsome modern shops and offices. Indeed, the very place where the pilgrims stayed is pointed out. It is no longer an inn, but a baby-linen shop. Some of them have old-fashioned names that half tell us their history. There is the 'Fleur-de-lys,' for instance, reminding us of the days when those emblems figured in the national arms. Near to this is the 'George and Dragon,' a very good specimen of the old coaching inn. Half-way down the High Street we cross the arm of the river Stour, a narrow winding stream, over which the houses seem to meet.

Just here is another of those hospitals founded for the benefit of the poor by charitable people in olden times, for which Canterbury is famous. Eastbridge Hospital—originally intended for the relief of poor pilgrims—was founded many hundreds of years ago, and the present building is of great age. Like most of these institutions, it has had a chequered history, having been spoiled of its possessions several times and re-endowed. It still harbours a few pensioners, but is chiefly a show-place, having some remarkable wall-paintings. The Black Friars and the Gray Friars also had their monasteries near here, and parts of the old buildings are still to be seen.

Like all cathedral cities, Canterbury is full of churches, most of them old, and all of them more or less interesting, according to the extent to which they have escaped the hands of the vandal and the restorer. A restored church has its monuments removed from their original position to make way for pews, its brasses stolen, its old oak pulpit taken down and chopped up for fire-wood, and replaced by a modern stone one. In fact, whatever was old is carefully put out of sight. In Canterbury they rarely trouble themselves to restore a church; they either let it fall into utter ruin, or else they destroy it. Whether the citizens will ever see the error of their ways, seems very doubtful; meanwhile, every year witnesses some act of vandalism.

In St Mildred's Church, at the bottom of Stour Street, near the castle, Izaak Walton was married. John Caxton, the brother of the famous printer, lies buried in St Alphege, near the cathedral; and William Somner, the antiquary, to whom the city owes a debt of gratitude that it is never likely to pay—for he first wrote its history, and took the greatest interest in its antiquities—rests in the church of St Margaret, just out of the High Street.

At the western end of that street is the one remaining gateway of the city, the Westgate. It is a fine stone archway, flanked on either side by a round tower. The walls of it are of great thickness, and it had loopholes for the archers and bowmen. It was for a long time a prison; and there is a document amongst the archives of the city that sets out that any stranger taken for a crime in the city was to be committed to the Westgate; and the heirs of certain persons, in respect of certain tenements near the gate, held by them of the lord of the manor, were to look after the prisoner by night; and the miller of Westgate Mill was to have charge of him during the day, though what he had to do with it does not seem quite clear; and the said lord of the

manor was to find the fetters and cords to bind him with.

Retracing our steps to the station, we pass the keep of Canterbury Castle. It is very similar to that at Rochester, which, to the honour of the townsmen, has been made a spot of beauty, set in the midst of pleasant gardens. The people of Canterbury have turned theirs into a coal-store for the gasworks.

Dusk is closing in as we walk through the beautifully-kept Dane John gardens; and with a sigh of regret we cast a last look at the beautiful tower of the cathedral, rising above the rest of the city, ere a bend of the railway line shuts it from our view.

THE OLD SLAVE-SHIP.

It would be a matter of some little difficulty to say, out of the many vanished types of ships, which of them all was most terrible in its appeal to the human passions. Perhaps the pirate—the genuine, old-world, Jolly Roger of the Spanish Main—might be held to be the most ghastly: the convict ship, too, was rendered a weird and lurid spectre of the ocean by the grim significance of her living freight of crime and misery; but, for pure tragic horror, there could never have gone any species of craft more fraught with melancholy and shocking associations than the slaver. To think of her is to recall stories of incredible barbarities perpetrated upon the crouching blacks, confined neck to neck down in the stifling 'tween decks; along with memories of that horribly famous tract of waters known as the Middle Passage. There are plenty of men still alive—and younger men, too, than one might imagine—who can yet recollect the slaver as among the commonest objects of the Caribbean Sea. Happily for the honour of the British flag, we have long been out of the traffic.

Yet there remains a weird kind of interest in the old slave-ship. What manner of craft was she? Tradition asserts her to have commonly been a long, low, rakish-looking schooner or polacre; with masts of a loftiness and spars of a width to give her a prodigious spread of white wings; keen as a yacht in her lines; tall bulwarks, broken at intervals by the grinning muzzles of carronades; and invariably furnished with that mysterious-looking object under a tarpaulin upon the fore-castle which one knows as well as possible will eventually turn out to be nothing more nor less than a 'long-Tom' of heavy calibre. In the main, there can be no doubt that this typical portrait is correct. If one would know the character of vessel the West Indian slaver really was, and have a picture of her and the class of gentry who composed her crew, rendered with integrity in a highly dramatic manner, it is to be found to perfection in the pages of 'Tom Cringle's Log.' No man was ever better qualified than Michael Scott to portray the slaver; and in that splendid passage of the hearty old sea-yarn which narrates the action with the Guineaman, he has given us a most graphic account of the slave-ship of his day.

Nor is the type which Tom Cringle illustrates by any means a modern creation. In a note embodied in that valuable work, Lindsay's

'History of Merchant Shipping,' is given a description of a slaver of 1786, as contained in a return upon the subject presented to Parliament by Mr Macpherson. This ship—with a lower deck 100 feet in length and 25 feet beam—when leaving the coast of Africa, carried, besides her crew, 351 men, 121 women, 90 boys, and 41 girls—a total of 603! She lost by death on her passage 10 men, 5 women, 3 boys, and 1 girl.

In some very entertaining notes of the voyage of H.M.S. 'Thunderer' in 1843, taken by her navigating master, Mr H. Davy, is a brief account of the later Cuban slavers. After remarking that in Havana and other western ports the slave-ships are familiar enough objects, greatly admired for their beauty of form, tall spars, and general rakish, Red-Rover-like appearance: how they are also abundantly well found in every respect, and rendered as efficient and seaworthy as lavish expenditure can make them, Mr Davy goes on to describe how altered the system had become in the Mozambique, in the Brazils, and in the West Indies themselves, compared with what it formerly was. At the period of his writing, the Cuban slavers found it necessary to have recourse to every species of trickery to conceal their identity; for the blue waters of the Mexican Gulf were studded with British cruisers vigilantly alert for craft with clean-swept holds and doubtful papers. 'The vessels thus employed,' writes Mr Davy, 'bear the semblance of the fair-trading merchantmen as much as possible, being barques and ships from 300 to 450 tons burden, of American and Baltic build, and preserving the resemblance in paint and general appearance below and aloft; they are generally well found, and if such a word can be allowed, are the most comfortable ships for the slaves. The smaller vessels, wretched in every respect, look like crazy old coasters, of various forms and rigs, but mostly as brigs. Such are the guises that slavers assume in pursuit of their horrid but too lucrative traffic, from the celebrated "Venus" and "Secora," to those unseaworthy craft.'

Captain Sir Richard Grant speaks of these two infamous ships, the 'Venus' and 'Socorro' (not 'Secora,' according to Mr Davy), in the 'Nautical Magazine' for September 1839. Arriving at Havana in the 'Cornwallis' in the year 1838, Sir Richard found the port crowded with slavers, and amongst them the two crafts already mentioned. 'The slave-vessels,' says this lively writer, 'are interspersed among the shipping on the Cabana shore, and are easily distinguished by their neat and rakish appearance. At the time I write there are upwards of twenty ships, brigs, brigantines, and a fanciful variety of schooners; scarcely a day passes but that some of them ship out, always under the Spanish flag; and others, having run their cargo, hoist the Portuguese colours, and come boldly in. The two largest and finest are the ships "Venus" and "Socorro," each about 350 tons. They are much masted, in fact all legs and wings; I was surprised at their immense topsails. They are two beautiful corvettes, pierced for twenty guns, fitted in most costly style, and well found. The "Venus" is as sharp as our river steamers, and looks rather ticklish; her best voyage she made in three months fourteen days, landing close to the Havana 830 slaves. It was considered the best speculation

that had been made for a considerable time, and well rewarded the proprietors, who made the captain a present of 20,000 dollars. The "Socorro" arrived, and landed near Port Mariel 570 slaves, upwards of 200 having died on the passage. I went on board just as she anchored; she was very filthy, had thrown her guns overboard or landed them. The captain, who was a Frenchman, said they had had very bad weather. He was chuckling at having eluded the "Nimrod," which vessel came in about an hour after him.'

Lord Palmerston's Bill for the suppression of the slave-trade, introduced and passed in 1839, gave great powers to the commanders of British war-vessels to board and overhaul any suspected ships. Naval officers were empowered to detain and take charge of any vessel fitted with hatches with open gratings, instead of the closed hatches which are usual in merchant vessels; divisions or bulkheads in the hold or on deck more numerous than necessary for vessels engaged in lawful trade; spare planks fitted for being laid down as a second or slave deck; shackles, bolts, or handcuffs; a larger quantity of water, a greater number of empty casks or tanks, and a more numerous supply of mess-tubs or kids than was consistent with the requirements of the crew of a merchantman; an extraordinary quantity of provisions, particularly rice, flour, and maize, unless a manifest could be produced proving it to be part of the cargo; and, finally, carrying a larger quantity of mats or matting than could possibly be necessary for the mere use of the crew.

The result of this rigorous enactment was to make our cruisers more alert than ever in West Indian and African waters; and in the year following (1840), 76 vessels were taken and condemned, and 3192 slaves set free. Yet the infamous traffic continued to be pursued with as great activity as ever. Englishmen may well feel a justifiable flush of pride on learning, from the returns presented to the House of Commons on February 26, 1850, that between the years 1840 and 1848 British men-of-war had taken no fewer than 625 ships, whereof 578 had been condemned, and the enormous number of 38,033 slaves set at liberty. In proportion as they were hunted, however, so the slavers seemed to have grown more defiant and daring; and on one occasion whilst the steam corvette 'Pluto' was blockading the mouth of the Congo, a schooner, deep with a cargo of blacks, came gliding down the river and ran boldly past the war-vessel. The crews of these vessels so taken were found chiefly to consist of Spaniards and Portuguese, Dutch and French Creoles, and a sort of *Lingua-Franca* men, of no nation, or rather of every nation, belonging nowhere, claiming no country as their own, and speaking all the Atlantic languages.

In the year 1850 the British Government, believing that a good measure to arrest this detestable traffic would be by entering into treaties with the savage kings from whose territories the unhappy blacks were chiefly drawn, sent a mission to the sovereign of Dahomey. The expedition consisted of Messrs Duncan, Cruikshank, Winnett, Forbes, and Becroft. As a result of the success they met with, we give a copy of a letter of which Mr Becroft was the bearer. The epistle, written at the sable mon-

arch's dictation, ran as follows: 'The king of Dahomey presents his best compliments to the Queen of England. The presents which she has sent him [chiefly umbrellas!] are very acceptable, and are good for his face. When Governor Winnett visited the king, the king told him that he must consult his people before he could give a final answer about the slave-trade. He cannot see that he and his people can do without it. It is from the slave-trade that he derives his principal revenue. This he explained in a long palaver to Mr Cruikshank. He begs the Queen of England to put a stop to the slave-trade everywhere else, and allow him to continue it. The king begs the Queen to make a law that no ships be allowed to trade at any place nearer his dominions than Whydah, as by means of trading-vessels the people are getting rich and resisting his authority. He hopes the Queen will send him some good Tower guns and blunderbusses, and plenty of them, to enable him to make war.' What was diplomacy to do in the face of such a policy?

On the 4th of June 1832, His Majesty's ship 'Curlew,' commanded by Captain Trotter, arrived off the river Nazareth, and having very good intelligence that a schooner, known to be a slaver, lay up this stream, Captain Trotter despatched three boats, manned by forty men, armed to the teeth, in quest of her. After rowing all night, the boats got sight of the object of their pursuit lying at anchor, and the better to secure her capture, they kept close inshore, that their approach might not be perceived. By this means they got within a mile of her unobserved, when, finding it impossible any longer to conceal themselves, they made a dash for the schooner and displayed their colours. Immediately they were seen, the slaver's crew took hastily to their boats and made for the shore, except one man, who was observed to follow shortly afterwards in a canoe. The blue-jackets gave chase; but the schooner's people had so far got the start of them that they had landed and disappeared before they could be overhauled. The 'Curlew's' men then boarded the vessel, and found that she had been set on fire near the magazine, in which were stowed sixteen casks of powder. By the prompt exertions of the captors, the flames were extinguished. The lieutenant in charge then overhauled the schooner, and found her fitted up for carrying slaves. Search was made for the vessel's papers; but, as had been expected, she had none on board. One curious document was discovered, however, well worthy of reproduction as an example of the orders which were delivered to the skipper of a slaver prior to setting out upon his voyage. The manuscript, which was written in Spanish, was headed 'Instructions for Peter Gilbert, Captain and Master of the Spanish schooner "Panda,"' and may be summarised as follows:

(1) You are authorised, from the time of your sailing, to pursue such a course as may appear to you to be best, first consulting the first-mate, Bernardo de Soto. (2) Upon your arrival at the place of your destination, you will use all diligence in your power in the purchasing and shipment of your cargo. (3) You will take particular care that there be preserved on board, between the officers and men, the greatest subordination and

best order. (4) Neatness and cleanliness being particular objects of interest, you will take the greatest pains that they be observed on board, and that the officers contribute their care and zeal to effect this object. (5) You will observe as much as possible meeting with any sail, particularly if there be any appearance of her being a suspicious one; therefore, you will have kept a good lookout from the masthead, charging them with the greatest vigilance, particularly in dangerous places. (6) A list of landing-places, &c. (7) Immediately upon your arrival, at whatever place it may be, you are to give proper notice of the place where your cargo is, stating the number of [slaves] you have brought, &c. (8) In case of extremity, and you cannot escape the chase of an enemy, you will disembark wherever you can; for, in extreme cases, there is no other way to do than to use your best judgment to save the voyage. We have no other instructions to give you, but that, in an unforeseen event, you are authorised to follow the dictates of your best judgment and prudence, first procuring, if need be, the opinion of the other officers.'

This curious document was unsigned. The name Peter Gilbert has a suspiciously British twang about it; but it turns out that the master of the 'Panda' was a Spanish Yankee, and that his name was really Pedro Gilbert.

The old slave-ship exists no longer save in the form of an Arab dhow, a Chinese junk, or a Zanzibar dug-out. The disappearance of the West Indian slaver from off the seas dates from the conclusion of the American civil war. The moral effect of that great fight for the black man's liberty was too overwhelming for even the Spaniards of Havana to stand against; and the stealthy, rakish schooner stole away for the last time to join the shades of countless other departed types.

TO BE A CHILD.

A VILLANELLE.

I SOMETIMES fondly used to pray
(Although the wish was weak and vain)
To be a child again at play.
Thoughts of the early budding May
Thrilled through the prayer which, in my pain,
I sometimes fondly used to pray.
Sweet fragrance from the woodland way,
And song of cuckoo, made me fain
To be a child again at play.
It was a coward's prayer, you say,
That with an aching heart and brain
I sometimes fondly used to pray;
But listen—'tis the skylark's lay!—
How sweet upon the daisied plain
To be a child again at play!
For freedom from the city gray,
For meadow-path and country lane,
I sometimes fondly used to pray
To be a child again at play.

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

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ABOUT INSURANCE.

INSURANCE is a subject in which the majority of men are interested as holders of policies on their persons or properties; but comparatively little is known of the history of this branch of commerce, or of the knotty questions in connection with it which have from time to time called for solution.

It is not easy to briefly explain the difference between insurance and assurance; but authorities lay it down that assurance relates to an event which is certain, and insurance to one that is uncertain, or may be only partly fulfilled. Thus, a contract to pay a sum of money at death or a given age would be an assurance; but one insures his house or ship, since he may suffer partial loss or none at all. But in practice the terms are treated as synonymous. The principle, again, that insurance is merely a distribution of loss, is not quite obvious when compensation comes from a company seeking a profit from its business: but it is so, the fortunate indemnifying the unfortunate. This is readily seen when members of a trade co-operate for mutual protection against, say, fire; and still more clearly when, as in the case of the canton of Zürich, compensation for loss by fire is given out of the public funds. Some corporations, especially of those connected with shipping, are their own underwriters, setting aside a certain sum as an insurance fund, and saving what they would otherwise pay in premiums. Thus, if the ordinary rate be ten per cent., the owners can afford to lose the whole of their property every ten years; and the practice has this to recommend it—more care is likely to be exercised in keeping vessels in a seaworthy condition.

Marine insurance, which is the oldest form, is of uncertain origin; but it was most probably familiar to the merchants of the republics of Genoa and Venice; while its antiquity in this country is clearly set forth in the preamble to an Act of Parliament of 1601 appointing a Commission to adjudicate on disputes arising out of

insurance. There we learn that 'it has been time out of mind and usage amongst merchants, when they make any great adventure, to give some consideration of money to other persons to have from them assurance made of their goods, merchandises, ships, and things adventured, or some part thereof.' In 1719 the Royal Exchange and London Assurance Companies were by royal charter given a monopoly of this branch of insurance, except as against individual underwriters; and this monopoly, though contrary to the common law, was allowed to exist until 1825. In connection with maritime insurance, reference to Lloyd's cannot be avoided, it being by far the most extensive organisation of the kind, insuring a very large proportion of British shipping, and possessing agents all over the world, whose duty it is to forward to London early intelligence of the arrival and sailing of vessels and of disasters. This great association of underwriters took its name from a coffee-house which in the time of Queen Anne stood at the corner of Abchurch Lane. The house was afterwards removed to the vicinity of the Royal Exchange, the underwriters going with it; but, later, they obtained rooms in the Exchange, where they are now housed.

Fire insurance comes next to marine in order of antiquity. Enforced or voluntary contributions to recompense sufferers from fire may be traced far back in history; but no attempt was made to treat the matter on business principles until after the Great Fire of London. In 1681 an office was opened for the purpose 'at the backside of the Royal Exchange;' the Hand-in-Hand was established in 1696; and several other companies soon followed. Scotland had its first fire office in 1720, Germany in 1750, and America in 1752, with Benjamin Franklin as one of the directors. The stamp duty on policies, which in 1816 amounted to three shillings for every hundred pounds insured, retarded the growth of the business; but in 1869 the tax was removed. Perhaps more caution is required in the conduct of this branch of insurance than of any other, the risks being not only of endless variety but subject

to constant change. The safety of a private house is affected by the character of the occupants, its age, the illuminants used, the water-supply, and so on; while as regards business premises no year passes without danger being discovered in some substance or circumstance to which hitherto no attention had been paid. A striking instance of the kind is that of flour-dust, which when mixed in certain proportions with atmospheric air has been found to be a powerful explosive. Arson by policy-holders, again, is a source of serious loss; and unfortunately retribution does not always follow, as, unless convincing evidence can be procured, companies are unwilling to imperil their reputation for liberal dealing by a prosecution which is likely to prove abortive. A House of Commons Committee in 1867 received evidence that during the fourteen preceding years the proportion of suspicious burnings had risen from thirty-four to fifty-two per cent. of the total number; and a recent prosecution showed the existence of a gang which had for twenty-five years made arson their business, one of them, who was known as 'the Fire King,' being alleged to have been concerned in five hundred burnings, and to have received in the shape of insurance some twenty-four thousand pounds.

In the seventeenth century it was customary for persons to insure their lives for short periods or against certain contingencies, and annuity societies began to gain a footing; but the first association to guarantee a sum of money at death was the Amicable, founded in 1706. One grave fault in the rules of this corporation—the equality of premium irrespective of age—was avoided by its successors, of which the earliest were the Royal Exchange and London Assurance, both incorporated in 1719. The Equitable, which commenced operations in 1756, broke new ground in issuing policies on joint lives and survivorships, and for fixed periods; but the data upon which all these offices worked were imperfect, no mortality tables being at the time available. For a long time the table constructed by Mr Joshua Milne, from information supplied by a Carlisle doctor in 1787, was the generally accepted one; but that and others subsequently compiled have been rendered obsolete by tables prepared in 1869 by the Council of the Institute of Actuaries in conjunction with the principal insurance companies. Life offices are carefully looked after by the State, being required to deposit twenty thousand pounds with the Court of Chancery until their security is assured by the possession of a reserve fund of forty thousand pounds. Annual accounts, and at certain periods actuarial reports, have also to be presented to the Board of Trade; and various other precautions are taken for preventing the formation of bogus companies and the continuance of companies whose solvency is doubtful.

Insurance against railway accidents dates from 1849, and against accidents generally from 1856. Many of the life offices have since taken up this business, which received an immense impetus from the Employers' Liability Act of 1880. Other branches are the guarantee of fidelity, and burglary and plate-glass insurance. The first is an obvious improvement on the old system of personal security, under which the employee was obliged to lie under a compliment to one or more

persons, of whose existence and solvency the employer had to periodically satisfy himself. The guarantee societies, too, are willing to give a collective bond for the members of a staff, arrangements being made in case of change to substitute one name for another; and all the premiums can be made payable on the same day. The offices which give security against burglary offer skilled advice as to the protection of premises, and lend men to guard unoccupied houses. Of course the rates of premium vary with the nature of the premises, and, in the case of shops, of the stock. Loss and damage may be insured against jointly or singly. The rate to cover damage only is a uniform one of two shillings per cent., except as regards jewellers' establishments; and those for loss range between two shillings and twelve and sixpence per cent.

As might be expected, a branch of business of so varied and complicated a character as insurance has occupied much of the time of the judiciary. Mr C. F. Morrell, barrister-at-law, the author of a recently published manual on *The Law of Insurance*, which is an excellent compendium of recognised authorities on the subject, and to which the writer of this article is largely indebted, cites a vast number of cases, many of them interesting. As regards misstatements in proposals, it has been decided that an error is not material unless the premium be affected, and that if a representation be substantially correct, the policy holds good. A single room in a building could not be 'truly and accurately' described as a dwelling-house, but the discrepancy has been decided to be unimportant; as also the statement that no fires were kept, though one was occasionally lit in order to air the premises. Again, there is a difference between an actual equipment of sixteen men, eleven boys, nine guns, and six swivels, and an alleged one of twelve guns and twenty men; but the error was not allowed to void the policy. But no reservation is permitted, as a man found to his cost when, a fire having broken out two doors away, he hurried off, and, without mentioning that occurrence, insured his premises. The fire broke out again two days later, spread to his place, and destroyed it; but the concealment deprived him of any claim upon the insurers. Similar decisions have been given as regards a life policy, where a person learned, after sending in his proposal, that he had a dangerous disease, but did not inform the insurance company; and where the insured failed to mention that a ship then engaged in peaceful pursuits had at one time been a celebrated Confederate cruiser.

We may wander for a moment in order to remark that soldiers, sailors, and travellers are now treated much more liberally than was formerly the case. Fifty or sixty years ago the Elbe and Garonne bounded the area beyond which the insured might not travel; but the forbidden area for ordinary premiums is now contained between thirty-five degrees north and thirty degrees south latitude, special rules, however, applying to Asia; and persons can go even within that area on payment of an extra premium; while 'whole-world policies' are issued by some offices at moderate rates. The magnitude of war premiums has seriously discouraged insurance among soldiers and sailors. A lieu-

tenant, for instance, engaged in the Egyptian war of 1882 was obliged, on a policy for five hundred pounds, to pay an extra sum of thirty pounds per annum; and two officers employed in the expedition to Ashantee paid twenty-one and twenty-five per cent. respectively. But it is not unusual for offices to remit the extra charge, in the event of the policy-holder returning in safety; and altogether the effect of competition is seen in increased liberality in this as in other directions. It is an axiom of law that nobody ought to benefit by his own crime, a provision which forbids the payment of insurance to a fire-raiser or a scuttler, and which led to an interesting trial in connection with the Maybrick case. Briefly, Mr Maybrick insured his life for two thousand pounds in favour of his wife. The insurance company resisted a claim set up by her representatives, on the ground that she had been convicted of poisoning the deceased; and the claim was abandoned. But the company also resisted that of the children, arguing that Mrs Maybrick was, under the Married Woman's Property Act, the only person entitled to the money; and the Divisional Court supported the contention. The Court of Appeal, however, decided differently, holding practically that Mrs Maybrick was as one dead, and that the money should pass to the children, as her husband's heirs.

The perils of the sea have been responsible for many legal disputes. A steamer, for example, meeting another in distress, attempted to tow her into port, and while so doing was herself wrecked. On a suit by the consignees of the cargo against the owners of the ship, it was declared that while deviation in order to save life was justifiable, it was not if property alone were in question. (It may probably be assumed that the charter-party did not expressly provide for such a contingency.) Again, a voyage having been delayed in consequence of tempestuous weather, the cargo, which was fresh meat, was ruined; but the loss was held not to come within 'perils of the sea, all other perils and misfortunes;' and the ship-owner, consequently, was liable for the loss. Nor is leakage caused by the gnawing of rats included in that category.

To the non-legal mind the term 'accident' would appear to be easily defined; but the late Lord Chief-Justice Cockburn thought not, and on several occasions insurance companies have sought a definition in the courts of law. It has been decided that a sunstroke is not an accident, but that injury to the spine through lifting a heavy weight is one. Even if physical ailments contribute to an accident, it is covered by the policy. The relatives of a man who while bathing in shallow water was seized with a fit and suffocated, sustained their claim; as did those of a man who when similarly seized fell under a train and was killed. Again, a person having fallen and dislocated his shoulder was put to bed and carefully nursed; but in less than a month he died of pneumonia. The connection between that complaint and a dislocated shoulder is not at once visible; but on the ground that the restlessness and susceptibility to cold produced by the accident led to the disease which killed him, the relatives were held to be entitled to claim.

'The influence of intoxicating liquor' has been authoritatively defined as 'influence which disturbs the balance of a man's mind or the intelligent exercise of his faculties;' and injuries received while in that condition are not covered by an accident policy. Nor are those caused by running obvious risk, as crossing a railway, even at a proper place, without exercising due care to avoid passing trains.

Less curious, perhaps, but not less important, are those cases, of which there have been several, but to which we have no space to do more than allude, where claimants were defeated by some of the numerous exceptions which companies have framed for their own protection; and if persons insuring desire to avoid disappointment for themselves or for those they leave behind, they will closely examine, and learn the exact value of, that somewhat complicated document, a policy of insurance.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER V.

To . . . Pomona, thus adorn'd,
Likest she seem'd—Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus.

MILTON.

'I WANT to show you a picture which I have been painting at intervals for twenty years,' Mr Ludlow said one day; 'and which a conversation I had with you a little time ago has inspired me to go on with; and I mean to work at it and finish it for next year's Academy. I want you and Kitty to sit to me for two figures in it. Kitty's is just the face I want for it—her round apple cheek and Ribstone pippin colouring will be exactly the right contrast to the apple-blossom tints in the central figure.—And you,' he said reflectively, studying her face and figure in a manner that would have been cruelly embarrassing to vanity or self-consciousness, but which Sage bore without flinching or gaining any colour in her smooth, pale cheek—a calmness to which I would draw the attention of those readers who still suspect a flirtation to lie concealed under the friendship between Owen Ludlow and Sage—'And you, I think I will dress in dead green—partly to suggest your name, Sage, and partly the apple-tree foliage, which is as dull a green as Nature has in her colour-box; though it is just right to set off the beautiful golden and red and brown of the fruit. I think you shall hold a long spray of ivy or a great sheaf of narcissus, and be all green and white and gold with the sun on your hair.'

'What is the picture called?'

'Pomona,' he answered; 'and I began painting it twenty years ago. Do you know the story?—how Spring loved her—the goddess of fruit-trees? It is easy to see how such a myth arose, if you stand in an orchard in May. I fancy painters have mostly imagined her from an autumnal point of view, with fruit and rich autumn colouring; but I like better to think of her with her lover the Spring, who was always young himself, and gave to her everlasting youth, which we know is true, for we see it every year for ourselves.—But he came to her disguised as

an old woman; and I have sometimes wondered how that idea crept into the story in the warm, sunny South, though it is very suggestive of some of our bitter, cutting east-wind spring days, that woo the apple blossom in very shrewish, cantankerous, nagging fashion.—But, after all, there is nothing to compare to our English spring, in spite of its capricious, changeable ways and nasty little tempers. I have seen Vertumnus in many parts of the world; but, when he is gracious and kind in England, he has a subtle charm which is wanting in him in other countries; and I have the same feeling about English apple blossom, though I suspect this of being British prejudice, as I have seen glorious orchards in America and in Normandy.—I wonder how you will like my Vertumnus? I have tried to paint him old and dull and faded, and yet with a hint of youth and passion showing through. I don't know if I have succeeded. Sometimes I think I am attempting the impossible, and am tempted to paint him out, and let Pomona stand by herself, and Vertumnus be only represented by the spring sunshine.—Well, we will show it to Kitty without telling her the story, and see what she makes of it. Children have a wonderful, ignorant directness of criticism; they will hit the blot ninety-nine times out of a hundred; while other people go circling round, distracted by dozens of second-hand, acquired opinions, or unconsciously ashamed to say what they really think. I could give worlds sometimes to see things with a child's eyes.'

Since that first evening when the boys and Kitty had so reluctantly accepted Owen Ludlow's invitation to tea, and even Sage had searched about in her mind for some excuse for declining it, no further reluctance had been manifested to accept his hospitality; indeed, Sage had sometimes to protest against uninvited invasions of the painter's studio, though Mr Ludlow assured her that the children were free to come and go as they liked.

Scar Cliff Farm stood on the high land above Scar, on nearly the highest point of the ridge that runs out into the sea, forming one end of Shingle Bay, and ending in Scar Point. It must have been a very bleak and exposed place in winter, when the great, rough west winds came roaring across the Atlantic, or the east wind whistled shrill and bitter. These swept right over the head of little Scar in its snug niche in the cliffs; but the farm must have felt their full fury, as the twisted and distorted trees testified, which grew between the farm and Scar Point, and which looked as if they were in full retreat from the edge of the cliff, vainly seeking shelter from the rude wind, which had blown their petticoats over their heads.

Owen Ludlow's studio was a large room, built on at the side of the farm, with a north light, and larger windows than the rest of the farm possessed. I think at one time it must have been a barn, and I also have dark suspicions that it was used in old times for storing away smuggled goods—those old times, which the boys so greatly regretted had passed away, when cargoes of brandy and lace and tobacco were run into snug corners among the rocks on dark nights, and the revenue cutter hovered about the coast, ready to pounce; and there were thrilling encounters of desperate

men on the cliff's paths, and pistols and cutlasses were the order of the day, and life was not the peaceful, loafing existence along the coast that it seems nowadays. I think it was the big room and the north light that kept Owen Ludlow at Scar, as well as the fascinations of Scar Point, which he had described to Sage; and it may have been partly, also, the kind face of Mrs Stock, the farmer's wife, a good, little dumpling of a woman, who treated all men-folk as poor helpless creatures, requiring endless humouring, and quite unable to take care of themselves.

She had a big solemn Methodist husband, Job Stock, who attended little Bethel at Shingle with great regularity, being elder or some sort of office-bearer there, though it could have been no office requiring many words, as he was a remarkably taciturn man, his wisdom, if he had any—and I think he had—being inarticulate. His wife set great store by his sanctity and learning, and treated him with a curious mixture of reverence and contempt, as being at the same time a shining light and a poor creature.

Kitty was not at all averse to sitting to Owen Ludlow, having already had a taste of the process when he made the sketch of her sitting on the boat, though he was half done before she was aware what he was about; and she declared her willingness to sit till Christmas if she might have Twopenny, Mrs Stock's large tabby cat, on her lap all the time.

That picture which Owen Ludlow had taken twenty years to paint, and which he displayed to Sage and Kitty that afternoon, had hardly been shown to any one before; and there was a curious nervousness in his mind as he turned the large canvas round and placed it in the proper light. It seemed like turning his very heart out to public view—it was like being suddenly called upon to shout his most private and heartfelt prayers from the house-top; and at the moment he felt that, if it cost him so much to display it to his gentle, appreciative girl-friend, and to the child, whose unbiased opinion he had wished for only a few hours before, it would be altogether unendurable to have it on the Academy wall, and to have it looked at through fashionable double eye-glasses, and criticised either ignorantly or scientifically. 'No. 389.—What is that? Pomona. Let me see, who was she? Some one in the Bible, wasn't it? Or was it in one of Shakespeare's plays?—Who did it? Ludlow? Ludlow? Don't know the name. We really ought to have marked our catalogue before we came, so as not to waste our time on unknown painters.'

Or worse still, perhaps. 'How's that for flesh tints? Out of drawing in that arm, eh? Where did he raise his model? Oh, any one can see that with half an eye; it's Pattie Seymour, Jones's Madonna, and Smith's Phryne.'

Great heavens! what desecration!

'She must have been very lovely,' Sage said, knowing—though he had never told her—that it was Katharine, the young wife, dead long ago, who smiled out of the canvas. She was dressed in a loose classical dress of creamy white, showing here and there an under garment of soft pink; and she was stretching one dainty hand to pick a narcissus growing at her feet; while the other hand rested lightly on the lichen-covered branch of the apple-tree under which she stood, and

which was covered with apple blossom of the same tint as her complexion, through which showed the sky of the very same blue as her eyes.

If all the world were like Sage, Owen Ludlow felt he would not have minded all the world seeing his treasure.

But Kitty? She was standing tilting slowly backwards and forwards from heel to toe, a habit of hers when she was deeply ruminating; and her brows were knitted over her eyes, which were fixed, not on the central figure, which was the only thing that Sage looked at, but on the other figure, in the shadow, half-turned away—another woman, with a worn, handsome, dark face, and a certain dignity in her tall spare figure, looking down at the sweet, radiant face of the girl with glowing, dark eyes.

'I don't understand what it means,' Kitty said with that perplexed frown; 'and I don't like that old woman. She puts me in mind of the wolf in Little Red Riding-hood—"What big eyes you have, grandmother!"—"The better to see you with, my dear."—She's horrid. She looks as if she were going to eat the girl.'

'Oh, hush, hush! Kitty,' Sage interrupted with a quick glance at Owen Ludlow's face, to see if he were offended at such openly adverse criticism; but he only laughed.

'I think, on the whole, that is a feather in my cap,' he said. 'I've looked at it till I could see no meaning in it, and Vertumnus was just an ordinary old woman without a sign of anything out of the common about her. If it tells its tale to every one as well as it does to Kitty, I shall be well content.'

CHAPTER VI.

I was a sketcher then;
See here, my doing: curves of mountain, bridge,
Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built
When men knew how to build upon a rock.

TENNYSON.

To both Sage and Kitty those sittings to Owen Ludlow were very pleasant. Kitty did not find the solace of Mrs Stock's cat invariably necessary, though it was freely accorded to her whenever she wished.

It was no very important part of the picture that the two girls filled. I daresay many who looked at it when it was finished hardly noticed the slim, fair girl on the right side in the dull green, clinging dress, holding a trail of ivy loosely in her hand; or the child sitting at her feet in a russet brown dress, and with her round red cheek and warm colouring of hair and complexion showing up richly against the dull hue of her companion's dress.

The attention was concentrated, as was right, and intended, on the central figures; but Kitty, at any rate, regarded the picture as a portrait of herself and Sage, with the figures of Pomona and Vertumnus forming an insignificant background.

Sage, too, lived a good deal in the picture, though with her the central figures played a larger part. Pomona was her friend, Vertumnus had made her his confidante. By-and-by, when the disguise fell away, and the young god stood confessed, Pomona would turn to her in her surprise, and clinging to her with those fair, soft arms, hide her shy, sweet face on her shoulder.

I wonder—but this never occurred to Sage's mind—if, when that supreme moment came, Vertumnus or Pomona either would have cared for the presence of a third, however sympathetic.

'Sage,' Owen protested, 'you have introduced a new element into the picture. I never intended or imagined that any one should have seen through Vertumnus' disguise; but I have done my utmost to take the recognition of him out of your eyes, and it is always there. Well, let it be—lookers-on, they say, see most of the game; so perhaps the little maiden standing by saw more than Pomona herself. I painted Vertumnus from a young fellow who was with me for a long time in California. He was hardly more than a boy then: let me see, that must be something like ten years ago. He had got into some sort of a scrape at home, and fallen out with his people. He was a good-looking, clever lad, and had been spoilt and made much of; and from all he told me, I'm sure his father was only too anxious to receive the prodigal back, and kill the fatted calf; but he couldn't make up his foolish, young mind to eat humble-pie, which is often the form in which the fatted calf is served up, and to be forgiven and rejoiced over; so he went right off to America; and there, I fancy, he did a good deal of the pig-minding and husk-eating part of the business before I came across him. He was pretty well at the end of even those resources when he stumbled into our ranch one night, and just dropped at the door as we sat smoking the pipe of peace after our day's work. Collins thought he was drunk, and I thought he was dead; but he was neither one nor the other; though he did his best to justify my opinion any time the next six weeks, when he lay on my bed, and Collins and I nursed and doctored him on principles evolved out of our inner consciousness. I wonder we did not kill him twenty times over between us; but he had the constitution of a horse, and survived our treatment, and was benighted enough to believe that we saved his life, and was so outrageously grateful, that Collins declared that life was insupportable under the weight of virtue imputed to him. But we both of us liked the young fellow; and we got so used to having him pottering about us, that when he went home to his people, we found the old diggings, that had done well enough before, so quiet and dull, that with one consent we agreed to strike our tents and return to civilisation.'

'Have you seen him since?'

'Oh yes; he often swoops down on me when he's in England. He is a Secretary or something at the Embassy at Edelstadt—plenty of fun and not much money. I think it's rather a throwaway, and that he had stuff in him to do something better; but his people are the smart, fashionable sort, and I think they expect him to marry money, and get on that way.'

'Not marry Pomona?'

'No; her apples were not golden. You can't tell from the picture how good-looking he is, for I have taken the youth and the sex out of his face. I wish I had the sketch I made of him for the picture to show you; but I sent it to his mother. It was while I was painting it that I found out who he was, for he kept his name dark, and always protested that he wouldn't go home till he had made his fortune—or, at any rate,

a competency. But fortunes are not made in a few days, or competencies either; and I had my doubts if he was the sort to make either; and it did not look like doing it in a hurry, just pottering round and washing my brushes, and filling old Collins's pipe; and I knew he had a mother, for he talked of her no end, when he was light-headed with the fever. So, when he dropped out by accident the name of the place where his father lived in Yorkshire, I pretended to take no notice; but I wrote to a man I knew not far from there, and asked him to find out who they were, and to drop them a hint of their son's whereabouts; and a few weeks later, old Collins came in with a letter directed to Maurice Moore, which we both agreed was a name we had never heard, and that it must be some one at Nelson's ranch, ten miles on. But just then I happened to look up, and saw my young friend's face crimson, and his mouth twitching, though, if his name was Robert Baines, as he had made out, there seemed no reason why he should have taken any notice. But I guessed in a minute what it meant; and I just tossed the letter down on the table, and got Collins out of the way for a bit; and when we came back, both the letter and Baines were gone; and indeed Baines never came back, for in the evening Maurice Moore came in and told Collins and me that he had heard from home, and that his mother was ill, and he supposed there was no help for it but that he must go back. He could not imagine how they had traced him out, and I don't think to this day he knows. It's all very well to say what's in a name? But there is a good deal; and I have never quite felt that Maurice Moore and Robert Baines are the same; and I have a sort of fancy that some day the old Bob will come sauntering in, in his flannels and broad felt hat; and we shall all laugh to think we ever could have mistaken Maurice Moore for him.

It is very curious how often it happens in life that you think or hear of a person immediately before you see him; that some one comes into your mind of whom, perhaps, you have not thought for weeks or months, and the minute after, you meet him in the street, or find a letter from him on the breakfast table. So it happened in this instance that the very day when Owen Ludlow had been telling Sage the story of Maurice Moore, he appeared on the scene, coming, as it seemed to Sage, right out of the sunset, and arriving on the extreme end of Scar Point, while the painter and the two girls sat on the beach watching the glowing sky.

'Look!' Sage exclaimed; and Owen Ludlow, who had perceived him at the same moment, echoed the word. It was too far off to distinguish who it was; but even at that distance Sage was certain that Kitty's guesses as to his identity were not correct, and that it was neither Cottam nor Leach, nor any other of the Scar men. They watched him as he came along the top of the ridge, distinct against the sky, and then lost sight of him as he turned down the cliff-path towards Scar; and they had forgotten all about him, and were slowly wending their way from the beach to the village, when some one came with a flying leap from the bank above, right in front of the painter, and seized him by the shoulders and whirled him round.

'Bless my heart! Sakes alive! Goody gracious! Well, a never!' Ludlow exclaimed in the accents of a frightened old woman.—'Sage, this wild man of the woods, this octopus, this Jack-in-the-box, this bolt from the blue is Maurice Moore!'

But Sage had needed no introduction, for she knew it was Vertumnus.

MILK-TREES.

PLANTS yielding a milky juice are not at all uncommon; they can be found in numerous families of the vegetable kingdom and in all parts of the world. Thus, in our own country we have the Dandelion, Poppy, and certain members of the order Campanulaceæ (Harebell family), and also species of Urticaceæ (Nettleworts). It is to the acrid juice secreted by the gland at the base of the sting of the common stinging nettle, that we owe the unpleasant effects produced by contact with this plant.

Although many of these plants yield a milk which is highly acrid, and in some cases very poisonous, there are a number whose latex possesses useful properties. Thus, we have the 'Carica Papaya,' the juice of which has already been alluded to in an article upon Vegetable Pepsine which appeared in the *Journal* of October 1, 1892. India-rubber and gutta-percha are each the solidified milk of various species of plants; and last, but not least, we have five trees in the New World which are stated to produce milk as abundantly as cows, and quite as palatable. One of the best known of these, 'Brosimum galactodendron,' is a tree of the Bread-fruit family. It grows from fifty to one hundred feet in height, and is found in large natural forests on the mountains near Cariaco and elsewhere along the sea-coast of Venezuela. The milk, which is obtained by making incisions in the trunk of the tree, has a slightly balsamic odour, and a taste resembling that of sweet cream. It is very nourishing, and perfectly wholesome, the only unpleasant feature about it is that it is rather glutinous.

Humboldt, writing upon the plant, says: 'We drank considerable quantities of it in the evening before we went to bed, and very early in the morning, without feeling the least injurious effect. The negroes and the free people who work in the plantations drink it, dipping into it their bread of maize or cassava. The major-domo of the farm told us that the negroes grow sensibly fatter during the season that the Palo de Vaca—one of the Spanish names for the tree—furnishes them with most milk. This juice exposed to the air presents at its surface—perhaps in consequence of the absorption of the atmospheric oxygen—membranes of a strongly animalised substance, yellowish, stringy, and resembling a cheesy substance. For several months of the year not a single shower moistens its foliage; its branches appear dead and dried; but when the trunk is pierced, there flows from it a sweet and nourishing milk. It is at the rising of the sun that this vegetable fountain is most abundant; the blacks and natives are then seen hastening from all quarters, furnished with large bowls to receive the milk, which thickens and grows yellow on its surface. Some

empty their bowls under the tree itself; others carry the juice home to their children.'

Humboldt advised Boussingault to submit it to a chemical analysis, which he did. He says the milk produced from the tree is of a thicker consistence than that of the cow, and its reaction is slightly acid; exposed to air, it turns sour, and coagulates into a sort of cheese.

Summing up the results of his analyses, he says: 'We have found in this milk (1) A fatty substance like beeswax, melting at one hundred and twenty-two degrees Fahrenheit, very soluble in ether, but less soluble in boiling alcohol. It probably consists of several substances; and after being melted and cooled down, has the appearance of virgin wax. We made good candles with it. (2) A nitrogenised substance analogous to caseine, and recalling the vegetable fibrine which Vauquelin discovered in the sap of the "Carica Papaya." (3) A saccharine substance, the exact nature of which we were unable to determine. (4) Salts of potash, lime, and magnesia partly in the state of phosphates. For some time M. Boussingault was unable, owing to other pressing matters, to ascertain the nature of the sweet matters; but he ultimately determined them as made up of sugar, inverted sugar and gum, easily turned to sugar.' In concluding his report, he says: 'The vegetable milk by its constitution approaches as nearly as possible to the milk of the cow, for it contains a fatty substance, saccharine matters, albumen, and phosphates. But the proportion of these substances is different in the vegetable milk. The amount of fixed matter is three times larger than that in the milk of the cow; so that the vegetable milk approaches more nearly to cream than to milk.'

Dr Spruce, the renowned South American traveller, mentions another tree, a member of the Dog-bane family, the juice of which is used as milk. On the bark being wounded, the milk flows abundantly, and is of the consistency of cow's milk, of the purest white, and sweet to the taste. The Indian mode of taking it is to apply the mouth directly to the wound, and thus receive the milk as it flows. Dr Spruce says he has often partaken of it without experiencing any ill effects.

In Guiana, the natives employ the milk from a tree belonging to the same family as the last named; in the vernacular it is known as Hyahya, and to botanists as 'Tabernaemontana utilis' (so named after Jacobus Theodorus Tabernaemontanus, a German physician and botanist). The milk has the same flavour as sweet cow's milk, but is rather sticky, on account of its containing some caoutchouc.

In Para, a lofty tree, belonging to the Star Apple family, attaining a height of one hundred feet, is used in a similar manner to the others mentioned. Incisions are made in the bark, and the milky juice flows out copiously, about the consistence of thick cream, and if it were not for its taste, which is somewhat peculiar, could hardly be distinguished from it.

Besides the general usefulness of the juice as milk, it possesses a property which, although far more valuable, is oftentimes overlooked. Our readers will have noticed the fact that the milk is always viscid, and contains a little caoutchouc; this renders it a most important remedy for

dysentery. Its utility in this respect has been personally confirmed by an English gentleman who, some years back, resided on the Pacific coast. He says: 'I was attacked with diarrhoea, which in two days passed into very severe dysentery. In the space of twelve hours I was reduced to a state of utter prostration, suffering the most excruciating pains. The bloody discharge was so terrible that it seemed possible to predict death within a few hours. The violent phase of the disease only developed at nightfall, and I passed the night in a helpless state. At daybreak the wife of one of our inspectors was called in as a nurse, and by nine o'clock *leche de vaca* (Spanish for the milk) was obtained. Up to this time I had been getting rapidly worse, and was then hardly conscious. The milk was given to me—a tablespoonful in a glass of water—every half-hour till twelve o'clock mid-day, and at this hour I was perfectly free from dysentery or the slightest symptom of it. Broths and light foods were then given to me for a few days, and I was restored to perfect health without taking any more milk or other medicine, and without having the least recurrence of symptoms of dysentery.'

The tree from which this milk was obtained was the '*Clusia galactodendron*,' a native of Venezuela, but found also on the Pacific coast, and in one or two other places. It is said to contain a resinous and an astringent principle, and an aromatic and tonic substance. The action of this combination is considered to be mechanical, so far as relates to the resin, which no doubt coats the intestines with a film and allays irritation. No other medicine is used in Choco, or on the Pacific coast of New Granada, for dysentery, and this disease is thought little or nothing of, as it is so easily cured.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXVII.—SUFFIELD GOES INTO THE 'CORNER.'

ISABEL's opportunity had come: the crisis had arrived—which she had so vividly anticipated some weeks before—when her 'family,' who had rescued and nurtured her youth, needed the surrender of her wealth, if not of herself. Without hesitation she sat down and wrote a cheque for fifty thousand pounds, payable 'to George Suffield, Esq.' ('my dear uncle,' she had a mind to add, so that all the world might guess from this document how good he was). She knew enough of her own business to be aware that there was not nearly so much money as that lying to her credit at the bank; but she also knew that certain securities could be quickly realised on the morrow. She did not wish to encounter George again; so she waited until after dinner, and then she set out with her cheque for Rutland Gate. She followed the footman into the library, where, he said, Mr Suffield sat alone. She knocked, and a smothered voice said, 'Come in.' She entered. Her uncle was sitting up in his easy-chair with a red bandana over his head, and an open book near him on the table.

'Trying to have an after-dinner nap?' said

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Isabel. 'I am so sorry to have interrupted you, uncle! But I wanted to see you alone.'

'No apologies, my dear,' said he—'no apologies. I was just looking at that *Don Quixote* there—wonderful book that!—and those pictures of Doré's—wonderful imagination Doré had, and all that sort of thing; and I was reading where that rascal, Sancho Panza, says, "Blessed be the man that invented sleep!" (nobody invented it, of course, you know)—"it wraps you about like a cloak!" And thinks I to myself, "By Jingo, now if I don't try it!"'

'You dear old uncle!' said she. 'And I interrupted your experiment!'

'It's of no consequence, my dear,' said he, with a laugh at his own joke; 'for I believe I've tried th' experiment before.—Sit down, and tell me th' news. I can't give you long, because I must be off presently to catch th' night-train down to Lancashire.'

'I believe, uncle,' said she, 'I've come on the same business as you must be going on.'

'Sayst tha, lass?' said he, and a shade of unusual seriousness settled on his face.

'George has told me all about it,' said Isabel, now somewhat shy about broaching her business; 'and I want you to do me a great favour, uncle.'

'What I can do, I will, my lass,' answered her uncle, eyeing her.

'I want you to let me help you with the money Uncle Harry left me. I have brought a cheque with me; there is not so much as that at present in the bank, but I shall make it all right to-morrow. Take it, please, uncle.'

He took the cheque from her hand, and looked at it and looked at her.

'It's not the whole,' said she, with a blush. 'But some of the securities will take a little time to realise—won't they?'

'It's the biggest cheque I ever saw!' exclaimed her uncle, looking at it again.

'And you will take it and use it, uncle, as a—' as a present from me?'

She was doubtful of his look: it did not seem to her that of an acceptor of a present.

'I'll take it, my lass'—

'Oh, thank you, uncle!' she exclaimed.

'I'll take it, my lass, but I'll not use it. But I'll frame it with a gold frame, and I'll hang it up and keep it as the biggest and the kindest cheque I ever saw!'

'Don't, uncle,' said she, with a deep blush of confusion and disappointment—'don't treat me as a child—as if I don't understand what I am doing!'

'Thou'rt nobbut a child to me, Bell, my dear,' said her uncle, rising with tears in his eyes, and patting her cheek, as he had been wont when she was a little girl. 'Thou'lt always be to me the bit of a lonely lass that gave me her hand in this London twenty years ago, and came away wi' me to Lancashire, and that has been a daughter to me ever since.—I understand, my lass, why thou'st done this! I thank tha, my dear!' He took her hand and pressed it. 'But it conna be! Can a father take his lass's bit of brass because she's generous enough to hand it over to him, and because he has been an owd fool?'

At that, Isabel was touched enough to shed tears, and foolish enough to have not a word to say.

The footman entered and addressed Mr Suffield. 'The keb's at the door, sir,' said he, and withdrew.

'Well, Bell, my dear,' said Suffield, 'I must go. But first—in case of mishap.'—He sat down and took pen and ink and wrote across the back of Isabel's cheque, 'Cancelled by Geo. Suffield,' folded it and put it in his pocket-book. 'Now, lass,' said he, rising again, 'kiss thy uncle, and say "Good-bye."'

Isabel kissed her uncle affectionately, saying: 'But I haven't done with you yet. It remains to be seen whether you are to have your way, uncle, or I mine.'

Her aunt entered to see that Suffield was properly wrapped up for his journey, and to beg that she might hear every day how matters went. Isabel and she stood on the steps to see the excellent man enter the cab and drive away through the winter night, to remedy or control the evils wrought by the self-confidence and rash ambition of his son.

Suffield went down to Lancashire strong in the main resolves to clear the name of his house from the offence and iniquity of 'cornering,' and to purge his business of such irregularities as had crept into it during his son's reign. It was not yet quite evident to himself into what details of action these resolves would lead him; for though, in the first flush of his indignation, he had been ready to make an immediate sweep of the 'corner'—so far as George was concerned in it—he now saw, being calm and having considered, that while ruin might be brought on himself by haste, no harm need be wrought on others by delay and temporising. He would like to 'unload' himself of the Gorgonian responsibilities—for his son's responsibilities were his—without gain to himself and without loss to others; he feared it was impossible to 'unload' at all without some loss to himself; but he hoped that by management the loss might be kept small.

When he showed himself at the works in the early morning, all were delighted to see him, but all wondered what had 'come to Mester George,' that 'th' owd mester' was there alone. Late in the day the effect was similar in the City—in his own office, in the streets, and on 'Change.

'Hallo, George!' was the greeting of old acquaintances. 'What's brought tha here again?'

'Business, my lad—business,' was his answer. 'Matters o' business to be seen to. But tha knows th' saying: "A wise head keeps a close tongue."'

Next morning he received a telegram from George, from Marseilles: 'Both train and steamer no go. Going on by steam-yacht. See Gorgonio.'

'Hired the yacht, I expect,' said Suffield to himself. 'That's more expense to little purpose!—And now, I suppose, in any case I'd better see that Gorgonio creature about this cornering.'

But the day was Saturday, when business closed early. Suffield, therefore, resolved to leave Gorgonio alone till Monday morning. He sat down and wrote to him that he wished to see him on very important business, if he would be so good as be at liberty to listen to him at an early hour on Monday. But his wish was grati-

fied sooner than he anticipated. He was just thinking of locking his writing-table and going home to Holdsworth, when Mr Gorgonio was announced.

'Show him in,' said Suffiel, and twisted round in his chair to receive him on the defensive.

Gorgonio entered with smiles and bows, and a general profuseness of affability and politeness. He had, he said, expected to meet Mr Suffiel the younger: he presumed he was addressing the father of Mr Suffiel the younger?

'Yea,' said Suffiel; 'I'm responsible for him both as his father and as head of the firm.' And he gave Gorgonio a pointed look to emphasise his statement.

'I am please, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio politely, 'to make your agreeable acquaintance.'

'I'm sorry to say, sir,' replied Suffiel, 'that I can't return the compliment.'

Gorgonio looked a little put out by that reply; and perceiving that Mr Suffiel was not only not prepossessed in his favour but absolutely prejudiced against him, his amiability sank into a more insinuating and watchful quality.

'I come over,' said he, 'to fill an engagement to lunch with your son, but I suppose he have forgot.'

'I suppose he did,' said Suffiel; 'and you see he's not here to-day. Still, if you like to lunch with me'—

'Thank you, Mr Suffiel'; but I cannot impose upon your politeness.'

'Just as you please, sir.—But what,' continued Suffiel, 'is this precious cotton business you and my son are concerned in?'

'You must excuse me, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio; 'but I cannot speak of your son's private business.'

'Private business be hanged, sir!' said Suffiel. 'It's not so peculiar and private to my son but that, so far as I understand yet, my money's pledged in it! What is the game?'

'You must excuse me, Mr Suffiel,' persisted Gorgonio. 'But at least I cannot tell you without your son's authority.'

'Very well. If you refuse to enlighten me fully about this business, I must refuse to be accountable at all for my son's engagements.'

'We had better wait, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio, 'till your son can be present.'

'My son, sir, cannot be present for two or three weeks'—

'Two or three weeks?—weeks?'

'He has gone away on a voyage—for the good of his own health, and mine, sir, and I cannot say when you will have an opportunity of seeing him.'

'It is very bad weather for voyage,' remarked Gorgonio, now gray-skinned and sharp-eyed with alarm and suspicion.

'My son's an Englishman, sir,' said Suffiel; 'and he prefers a voyage in bad weather, with the sea as rough as the wind can make it. But that's neither here nor there.—Are you going to explain to me the position of things, or are you not?'

'I am to speak to you, Mr Suffiel,' said Gorgonio, 'as if you were your son—is that so?'

'That is so.—Now, fire away.'

'Well, Mr Suffiel, the second part of that con-

signment from Bombay what you did give Mr Tanderjee a three-fourths advance for, is come into dock; I have seen it this morning, and it is not—any more than the other—worth two-pence a pound!'

'I'll see that cotton on Monday morning myself,' said Suffiel, taking out his tablets and making a note. 'Go on.'

Gorgonio stared in some surprise: obviously this was not the same man as Mr Suffiel the younger.

'I have bought for us,' continued Gorgonio, 'in the last two days ten thousand more bales for January delivery.'

'At what price?'

'At six and five-eighths.'

'And what is the "spot" price?'

'Spot, Mr Suffiel, is six and eleven-sixteenths; so, you see, we do very well.'

'Now,' said Suffiel, 'we come to the business I wanted to talk to you about: I had written to you to make an engagement for that purpose. You'll oblige me, sir, by buying no more; about the getting rid of what we have I can't speak till I know the whole situation.'

'Getting rid, Mr Suffiel! Unloading, Mr Suffiel! Oh, my great heaven!—do you know what you're saying, Mr Suffiel? The business is going just beautiful! Prices is steady! Nobody is afraid! Nobody believes nothing is going to happen! We hold two hundred thousand bales at this moment against a stock of a little over seventy thousand!—and nobody guesses it!—Get rid, Mr Suffiel? Bust up the loveliest corner as ever was?—and lose your chance of more than one hundred thousand pounds profit? Oh, surely no, Mr Suffiel! you are joking!'

'I've never knowingly made money dishonestly,' said Suffiel with unusual sternness, 'and I and mine are not going to begin now! If I made the profit you name out of this cornering business, I'd do it only by ruining or crippling scores o' men! I won't do it! And if I could, I'd shake the whole business off my hands this minute! But my son engaged to back you with money in this, and I'm responsible for my son. He gave you his word'—

'He give me his bond!' exclaimed Gorgonio. 'I have it on paper! It is in black and white!'

'His word would ha' been binding enough,' said Suffiel quietly. 'He gave you his word, and I must be bound by it. But since I—that is, my son—engaged to find the necessary money, I must have a voice in the business—and a final voice. And I say I want to have done wi' it as soon as possible: you'll do no cornering wi' my help. Clear it out—and the sooner the better. Only, at the same time, as I don't want to see anybody else lose, I don't want to lose myself if I can help it.'

'You are bound to lose, Mr Suffiel!' said Gorgonio desperately. 'Bound! When the "bears" find you selling—and you can't sell two hundred thousand bales in a hurry without being found out—down they'll send the prices!'

'Well,' said Suffiel with a grim tightening of his mouth, 'all I can say is: let us lose as little as possible.—You seem to have known how to

* 'Spot' price means, the price for delivery at once, or on the 'spot.'

buy without raising suspicions; you should be able to sell.'

'And what, Mr Suffiel', is to become of my profit?'

'You'll have your broker's commission from me: won't that do?' said Suffield.

'That is very little!—for all the time, all the brain, all the skill and knowledge I have spent on this business! Ah, this beautiful corner!—to be spoiled!'

'I'll do this much more,' said Suffield: 'if you can get off these bales at contract prices—at the prices you took them up at—you shall have double commission; and that, sir, is, in my opinion, more than twice as much as you deserve. A man that plans and makes a corner should be sent to hard labour and fed on skilly, just as much as a man that steals his neighbour's purse.—Good-morning, sir. I'll call on you on Monday, when, maybe, you'll see your way a bit better.'

IN IRON-LAND.

THERE are few dwellers in towns who are unacquainted with the inconvenience which arises when 'the streets are up.' Vehicular traffic has to be diverted into side-streets, and pedestrians as they pass along the pavement look down over temporary barriers into deep channels which are being hollowed out below the roadway. It may be that the business man as he passes the same spot morning after morning on his way to his office takes a little interest in watching the progress of the proceedings from the first stroke of the pickaxe on the hard road, until he sees the huge water-pipes, or perhaps the smaller gas-pipes, lowered into the cavity constructed for them. And perhaps the thought strikes him, whence come all these black pipes, which form the arteries for gas or water, branching out in all directions beneath the surface in our towns?

Well, a very great number of these pipes come from Staveley, in Derbyshire, where iron-works have been in existence for more than two hundred years; and the name 'Staveley Iron-works' is not an unknown one on coal-trucks, for the existing company are not only iron manufacturers, but extensive colliery owners as well.

It is in the second half of the seventeenth century that we first come across mention of 'a furnace' at Staveley. There was iron ore in the neighbourhood, which was dug and smelted on the spot, the material employed in the furnace being the wood which grew on the hill-sides around. Local ore is no longer employed, and most of that now used comes from Northamptonshire. The land on which these first works were situated was leased from the family of Frechville, who had already been at Staveley Hall for about three hundred years. The undertaking was a very small one, and the smelted iron could, so bad was the state of the roads, only be carted away in the summer. Some hundred years later we find a 'forge' mentioned, which shows us that the iron had now begun to be worked up at Staveley into manufactured articles. The business continued in private hands, growing gradually, until it became that of a company in 1864. The rapid progress which it has made in the last half-century may be estimated from the fact that

in the year 1840 there were only one hundred and twenty men employed in the works, while now there are eleven hundred. Those who like statistics will also be interested to hear that fifty thousand tons of castings and thirty thousand tons of pig-iron are turned out annually from the works. Of these castings, the larger number consists of water and gas pipes, though other articles are made; and at one time cannon-balls were manufactured at Staveley.

Leaving for the present the site of the ancient 'forge,' let us enter the principal works which lie between the railway line and the river Rother. A row of huge blast furnaces is the most conspicuous feature before us as we walk down from the station; and these, again, are flanked by the tall chimneys of the engine-houses. We make our way to the offices, and are soon provided with a guide. The first thing which strikes us as we walk across the yard is that we are surrounded on nearly every side by stacks of black pipes of all sizes; and here, just in front of the offices, we come across an archaeological curiosity. Side by side with a line of new iron pipes is a collection of trunks of trees hollowed out down the centre. These tree-trunks were the water-pipes of our ancestors, and the ones we are looking at actually formed a part of the original system constructed by Sir Hugh Myddleton, about the year 1666, for the purpose of supplying London with water, and were discovered beneath the Euston Road a short time ago. They seem to have done their work well, though their bore is not a large one. The largest modern pipes which are pointed out to us in the Staveley works are forty inches in diameter. Should the scheme of emptying one of the Welsh lakes into London ever become a reality, pipes of pretty considerable magnitude will be necessary to pour the water into the metropolis.

We are first taken into the pipe-factory, where we see deep circular holes sunk in the sand, which form the moulds in which the pipes are cast. The central core has, in order to give it sufficient adhesive character, to be formed of a very evil-smelling compound. The pipes when cast are finished off neatly at the end, and turned smooth on the outside and at the collar, where they fit into one another. They are then taken to another part of the works, where they are tested as to their soundness. This is done by closing up the ends of the pipe and then forcing water into it by means of hydraulic pressure. When the pipe is as full of water as it can possibly be, a workman strikes it smartly with a hammer, and under this treatment any flaw is sure to discover itself and burst. Sometimes oil is used instead of water in the testing process. The pipes are finally dipped in a huge caldron of boiling pitch, and when dry, are ready for use. It may be added, however, that different companies have different ideas with regard to the size, length, and finish of gas and water pipes, so that the Staveley works have to be ready for different classes of customers.

Blast furnaces are too well known to need any full description. Suffice it to say that coal and iron ore are packed into enormous cylindrical furnaces of some fifty feet in height; that the melted iron is run out from the furnaces into channels, or furrows, marked on beds of sand, and

that in the form which it thus assumes of short rough bars, it is called 'pig-iron.' The blasts of hot air which are forced into the furnaces—hence their name—are driven by a fine old-fashioned beam-engine of great size. It is curious to notice in the engine-room how mechanical checks are used to test the work that is done. There is pointed out to us against the wall a dial which records the number of revolutions of the fly-wheel during any specified time, and by means of this tell-tale index the manager can inform himself as to whether the engine-man has kept his machine at full working power.

But there is a great deal of machinery at the Staveley works besides that required in connection with blast furnaces and pipe-casting, for here the company constructs all the engines and other machinery needful for their numerous collieries, which are situated on the spot or in the neighbourhood. We are therefore invited to inspect the fitting-shops with their lathes, punching and cutting machines, steam-hammers, and all other appliances necessary for the construction of a steam-engine.

From the noise and heat and dirt of the work-shops of this character, it is pleasant to turn into the clean and quiet pattern-making shops. In these we see a band of workmen engaged in complicated carpentry, somewhat resembling the manufacture of furniture. But they are not engaged in cabinet-making, but are constructing, according to drawings prepared by the engineers, the wooden patterns or models which are to give their shape to the moulds in the sandbeds in which the iron castings are to be formed.

And now we cross the little Rother, which runs through the middle of the works, and divides the older part from the more modern portion. The little river runs merrily along over its stony bed, and a few trees stand yet upon its banks. Doubtless it was formerly a clear trout-stream, though its waters are of course now much befouled. On the banks of the river the original 'forge' once stood, and the Rother performed, by means of a large water-wheel, the work of moving the simple machinery employed in former years. Close to the site of the old mill is a house where the manager lived. It was once a pleasant habitation, with a garden, by the side of the stream; but soon the overhanging and rapidly increasing bank of 'tip,' or refuse from the works, will swallow it up. A little farther on is a mullioned-windowed house, perhaps nearly three hundred years old, still standing amidst grimy surroundings. This was once the farmhouse of the estate.

And now we have passed right across the works and from one bank of the Rother to the other, and we find that we have reached another line of railway, for the works are hemmed in by the iron road on each side. Upon a hill above this railway we see the modern workmen's village, crowning a slight elevation known as Barrow Hill. Close to the line stands a well-built and well-appointed Mechanics' Institute; and farther up the hill is a school chapel, which is served by the clergy of the mother-church of Staveley, in the old village, about a mile and a half away. In the school we see hanging on the wall the portrait

of Mr R. Barrow, the last private owner of the works; and one is glad to note that the company have not failed to carry on and develop the various organisations for the good of the workmen which he or his predecessors in the business originated. It is in contemplation that a permanent church should be built here, and then the existing building will no longer be used as it is now, and with much inconvenience, for a double purpose.

It is satisfactory to find, as we do now nearly everywhere, that the workpeople of large manufacturers are not treated as mere machines, but that provision is made for the moral and spiritual good of themselves and of their families by their employers. It is in such ways that a right aspect is put on one side of British industry and commerce, which was perhaps once neglected; and under such auspices it is to be expected that commercial enterprise will flourish in this island even more than it has done before.

A MALAGASY GHOST-STORY.

ONE evening I was sitting beneath the veranda of a house on the borders of the Upper Forest in Madagascar. It was one of those glorious evenings only to be found in the tropics, when the afterglow of sunset enriches and enhances the beauty of everything before darkness hides them for another night; when red flowers look like flame, and yellow like burnished gold. As the sun sank deeper below the horizon, the colours slowly changed, one blending with another till all grew sombre. Over to the east, behind the Forest, shot up the great white beams of the rising moon, distinct and regular. The trees stood out in bold relief; the very leaves seemed to separate and let the moonbeams through.

Grand as was the scene, my thoughts, I must confess, were hardly in keeping with it. I was thinking of pigs. I had been told by some natives that some wild pigs had been devastating their crops, and I was wondering how I could get a shot at them that night.

As I sat puffing at my cigar, and wondering if it were possible to secure the services of an old native who was said to be exceptionally skilled in the matter of pigs, I saw a shadowy form coming towards me; and presently the dusky figure of a native stepped out of the shadow into the moonlight, his white *lamba* (a long cloth worn by natives) shining brightly as he threw it farther over his shoulder.

'Why!' I exclaimed, 'it is Rainikoto himself—the very man I wanted.—Hi! Rainikoto, will you go pig-hunting with me to-night?'

'How do you do, sir?' he said with native politeness before he answered the question.—'What did you ask, sir?'

'Come with me to-night to look for that old boar that is eating up all your manioc, will you?'

'Where?'

'Oh, anywhere; I don't mind. At that little

open glade in the forest about a *rice-cooking** off, away to the east.'

'At the clearing to the east?'

'Yes.'

'I can't go; I have business to do.'

'Nonsense, man! What business can you have to do?'

'I can't go, sir,' he said again, squatting down on his hams beside me, and arranging his *lamba* so as to cover his mouth.

'But why?'

'I am an old man, and don't care for sitting up all night, as I used to do. I like sleeping better than shooting.—But what made you choose that place?'

'I thought it looked a likely spot, so many paths meet there.'

'Go about midnight; you are certain to see a pig,' he said, looking up with a curious expression.

I was surprised by the man's manner, it was so totally different from anything I had been accustomed to see in a native.

'Funny you should pick that place,' he added after a time.

'You seem to know it well, and say it is good; then why funny, my relation?'

'Oh, I know it very well.'

'I'll give you a dollar to come with me.'

The old man laughed. 'It is a big sum,' he said—'a week's pay. But not for fifteen weeks' pay would I come to that place at night, my master.'

'Oh, all right!' I said, pretending not to be curious. 'I'll go myself.'

I watched for some sign; but he sat looking out straight before him and evidently disinclined to talk. 'Is there a ghost there, Rainikoto?'

'Yes, perhaps,' he said, without moving a muscle.

'Have you seen it?'

'Yes, perhaps,' he again said, readjusting his *lamba*.

'Will you tell me about it?'

The old man sat perfectly still, as if in deep thought. No European could sit so long without moving. Not a limb, not the quiver of an eyelid. I waited for an answer, but none came. After a time, he took out his small polished bamboo tobacco-box. Shaking out a large pinch of the snuff-like preparation into the palm of his hand, he opened his mouth, and, by a peculiar jerk, tipped it in below his tongue—a decided hint for me that he meant to keep his story to himself, whatever it might be.

I knew it was no good pressing him then, so I lit another cigar and took no apparent notice.

Presently, native fashion, he spat out his tobacco, and seemingly addressing himself as much as

me, he began: 'White men don't believe in ghosts, and witchcraft, and *bagimla*;* they laugh at them, and at those who do.'

'Witchcraft, perhaps, my friend, and *bagimla* and *sibidy* [divination]; but we like to hear of ghosts. I do not feel at all like laughing; indeed, I very much wish to hear about it.'

It was a long time ago (he began so suddenly it made me start)—it was a long time ago; two kings and two queens have turned their backs upon us since then. I was but a little lad, but I remember it quite distinctly. I am old now; but I remember it well, as well as if it were only yesterday. My father was going into the Forest to get wood, only a short distance, so he took me with him. We had not gone far when we heard the long low whine of a lost dog. 'The boar-hunters are out early,' said my father, evidently surprised; 'they must have slept in the Forest. Ho! è, è, è, è!' he shouted; but there was no answer except from several dogs, which joined in one long howl.

'Ah! they are all lost,' he said; 'and no one shouting to let them hear. Ho! è, è, è, è! Ho! è, è, è, è!'

Again the loud chorus came ringing and echoing through the wood. We turned aside, and made our way in the direction of the dogs. Cry upon cry now arose. I remember it well. Am I likely to forget it? It was early morning, and there had been a heavy dew; my feet were cold and wet, and the dogs frightened me. I felt chilled and scared. My father had girded himself, and his brown skin glistened in the morning sun. How fast he went!—pushing his way through the tangled growth. I could scarcely keep up with him, for the thorny creepers caught my legs, although my father helped to clear the way, striking with his axe at the great lianas that stopped our path. I think in the excitement he almost forgot me, for he guessed that something was wrong, and he held his spear ready shortened in his right hand. It seemed a long, long time before we reached the dogs. They were all together in the clearing to the east. It has not grown up as others do; it is just the same. There they sat, some howling, some licking the wounds received from a tussle with the boar—

'Look, father! what is that?' I cried.

'À drè! à drè! It is a corpse. There are two: Rainimanga and Rainigapy—both killed by one pig,' he said, turning them over.

Ah! I remember them well, sir, these gashed bodies. It was a horrible sight for any one, much more for a little lad. The shaft of a broken spear lay near; and still grasped in the hand of one, lay the second spear. A look of surprise spread over my father's face as he gazed upon the man who held the spear.

'This wound would not have killed, and he never threw his spear. The other is nearly torn to bits! *His* spear has gone,' he said. 'I do not understand.—And what is this? Money! fifteen dollars!—How came that money here? Seven in one purse, and eight in the other.'

* A native way of measuring distance—equal twenty minutes; equal about a mile and a quarter.

* *Bagimla* are the supposed aboriginal inhabitants, whose graves and spirits are held in great awe and respect.

He looked at me, and then, as if thinking aloud, he added: 'No! I will not take it. It has had luck in it. I'll give it to their wives. Besides, if I kept it, they would say I had killed these men. I wish I knew how they got it, though!'

We soon raised the whole neighbourhood. The two men had come from the village over yonder (he said, pointing with his lips to a village about three miles away)—and their friends went and brought the bodies in. What wailing and mourning there was! what beating of tom-toms! But the money my father gave up was much more talked about than the deaths. Never had any one but the chief—nay, not even he—had so much before. The funeral was very grand: several oxen were killed; and there was a lot of *toaka* [native rum] in *siny* [earthen water-pots]. The money was a great comfort to their wives. We heard soon afterwards that a trader from the coast had dropped his purse, and he offered a reward; but then the reward was less than the money in the purse, so of course he never got it.

I soon ceased to think of that day, though the shock lasted long. As I grew up, I, too, became a hunter and forester. Malagasy, as you know, are not fond of hunting like you white men; the Beganogand tribe are the most so; but even only a few of us care for it. I liked it, and soon became proficient. One day a white man came to our village and stayed there. He was looking for birds, which he skinned: he never ate them, which surprised us. He taught me to skin and shoot; and when he went away he gave me the gun. I was very proud of it; and soon I found I could get wild-pig much easier by waiting for them at nights and shooting, than by hunting them with dogs. So I used to go to the bush where you wish to go to, to-night.

He looked up at me with a sharp, keen, side-long glance, as if to read my thoughts, and then proceeded:

I nearly always got some, though you white men don't, for you have no patience; you sit and wait for one hour, perhaps, and then you get up and walk a little, or think another place better, or go home; but we Malagasy will sit without moving for hours. Whenever pig came this way, I was sure to be waiting for them, and the glade you mentioned was a favourite place. You'll see some to-night, sir, when you go, for I know their habits well. The herd that were in the sweet-potatoes and manioc last night, will come that way; they will be there about midnight, and return about second cock-crow.

His wrinkled old face broke into a sort of satirical smile, as he paused. Without knowing quite why, I began to feel 'creepy'; but I answered with apparent unconcern: 'Well, I hope so, Rainikoto. But you have not yet told me about the ghost, you know.'

'Oh, I shall. I am coming to it. But you had better go, and it will save me the trouble of telling you. You will see it all then for yourself.'

'I should like to hear it first, you know, to see if it agrees with what you saw.'

'Well, master, you are my father and mother, and I should like to please you; but it is a long story.'

'Go on, my relation,' I said, answering his politeness in the orthodox way.

He got up, readjusted his *lamba*, and squatting down a little more in front of me, began:

'It was on the 15th day of the moon Alahatsaty'—

'Why! that's to-day!' I said.

Is it? (he said). Let me think. Yes; so it is. That is funny.—Well, it was on this very day, about ten years ago, I went to watch for pig at yonder glade. It was just such another night as this. The day had been very hot, and these little whirlwinds had been raising their dusty columns on the road—the spirits of our forefathers visiting the earth or returning to heaven, we Malagasy say. There had been a good many that day. I remember well. But they have not much to do with the story, nothing in your eyes.—A herd of pig had been among the village crops the night before. I had tracked them, and found out the way they had come. I noticed the slot of a huge boar, and I meant to have him. They passed right through the clearing. That glade has never altered, as the others do; it is the same now as then; and it was the same then as when I was a little boy; but it never struck me till after that night, and then I noticed it. The grass grows just the same, and the trees do not seem to change.

The old man, I noticed, was dropping into the native style of rhetoric, a form not unseldom heard in British pulpits, a certain reckless way of wandering up and down the keys of thought, and then the persistent striking of a single chord, with an emphasis varying directly as the number of repetitions.

Ay, it was just such another night as this, just the same; the same little fleecy clouds rushed across the full moon. The children were dancing in its rays, as they are now down yonder, and their song came rising and falling on the wind as now you hear it. The night was just the same; the crickets chirped and whistled in the grass; the great cicada rang his rattle as loudly as he now is doing—just the same. The dew was sparkling on the broad leaves, like tears on the cheeks of a young wife who has lost her child, her first-born. The frogs croaked in the marshes—a sign of rain, I've heard you say: we call it the women's parliament, for it is much talk and little meaning; for here, it is no sign of rain. Croak they will, as frogs and women always must. They could not live without it. Ay, master, the night was just—

'The same, my dear relation. Let us agree that the night was just the same,' I said, breaking in rather rudely, perhaps. 'The very birds, beasts, fishes, insects, you know, they always are the same, except when it is raining.'

'I said you would laugh at me. If you laugh already, what will you do before the end?'

'I laugh! My dearest father and mother, I am so anxious to hear the end that I have even been rude. Pray, excuse my haste; my eagerness outstepped my manners.'

Malagasy are not easily offended, and he soon went on again.

It was a short time before midnight that I started. I took my gun and spear and the usual little hatchet we all carry. No one went with me—I was quite alone. I soon reached the place,

and sat down, hiding behind a large clump of *sera-be*, through the broad leaves of which I could watch the whole glade from end to end. It is about thirty *repy* [fathoms] long. The moon shone brightly; not a cloud obscured its rays; not a breath of wind could be felt inside the forest; but the tops of the taller trees rustled gently, and the twisting leaves showed their white linings with every little puff. The tree-frogs alone seemed to break the silence, for they alone were near me.

I had sat about two hours, and had seen nothing. I began to think the pigs must have passed out, or gone another way; and I had made up my mind to alter my position, so as to see them better when they came back in the early morning; but still I sat on, not caring to own myself at fault. I was just opening my tobacco-box, and had put my gun down by my side; my spear was sticking upright in the ground before me, and my axe on my knees, when I became conscious that something was going to happen, but I knew not what. I felt my head, to see if I were faint or dreaming. I never felt any feeling like it before, or since—a sort of trembling, cold, indescribable feeling, as if one's spirit were fighting with one's body. I was afraid, and thought I was ill—perhaps dying, perhaps bewitched; and I rose to go home. So disturbed was I, that I forgot to pick up my gun. Just at that moment a huge boar rushed past, his bristles all up, and his little eyes flaming from under his grizzled brows. He was covered with mud from head to tail; his jaws were set as if for fighting; he looked distressed, and evidently hunted, being hard put to it. He was the largest and oldest boar I had ever seen, for his horns* were very long and large, and his tusks gleamed long and sharp in the moonlight. I could easily have shot him, had I had my gun; but I was startled and surprised; and he was past before I regained my presence of mind. I held my axe, though, and without knowing what I did, I hurled it after him. Round and round it flew and lit a foot in front. I thought it must have grazed him; but he never stopped. I was astonished, for nothing followed; and a thing that did not strike me at once, but which I vividly recalled afterwards, was, that there was no sound; yet he had run right through some dry fern.

The old man stopped and altered his position. It evidently made him nervous to recall that night's adventures, even when sitting inside a veranda, and near one of the all-powerful white men. Glancing timidly over his shoulder, he began again.

I got up, master, and picked up the axe. For a time the funny feeling had left me, owing, I suppose, to the excitement; but as I touched the axe, my hand shook like a rush in the wind, and became as cold as the dead. I looked at it, to see if there was blood on it, and I ran my finger along the edge. It was the finger of the other hand, and it shivered like the hand that held the axe. I was horribly afraid now, and knew not what to think. I wished to go home; but I wished still more to know what had become of the boar, and what had chased it. I remem-

bered his enormous size, and I thought my eyes, being ill, might have magnified it, or that I had even seen a vision. I stooped down to examine the slot in the wet clay; but there was not a mark. I could not believe it. I knelt down and peered into the clay; not a sign. I was on the point of rising— Oh, sir, I shall never forget it. No! not to my dying day. There he was!—the boar! right on me, not ten yards off, and coming hard down on me—looking death in every line. I gasped, I shuddered; but I was still a man, and all my trembling ceased as I jumped up for one last effort. There was no room to move, for I had followed him out of the glade to that narrow passage between the high clay-banks; for there, if anywhere, I knew his marks would show. Five-feet perpendicular banks on either hand, and an immense boar in full charge. He had come without noise, or I must have heard him yards away. I had just time to get on my feet and strike at his head with the axe with all my force. I meant, as soon as I felt the axe bite, to jump high, and so miss the rush and tusks. It was no use to jump and not strike, for he would have turned on me again. I just saw his great red carcase as it loomed before me; there was time for much thought, but for little action. Down came my axe on his head; but there was no resistance! I lost my balance, for I had thrown all my weight on to the blow, and fell right on to the top of him.

I shut my eyes, and breathed a prayer to the Great Spirit to receive my soul. I knew I was a dead man, unless a miracle was wrought, for I should never be able to get up before he would be on me again, even if he missed me then. How long I lay I knew not; but at last I found I was lying unhurt in the path and no sign of the boar. I looked cautiously round without rising, in case he was there, waiting for me. Yes, there he was again—he, too, unhurt. How I ever missed his head I could not then imagine, for I was an expert axeman, and I saw the blade fairly on him. Some sudden twist had saved him, I thought. But what was he doing? I thought him mad. For there he stood at bay against a tree near the glade; but not a sound, not a grunt, rushing as if at dogs with all his bristles set. Look, master, I see him now!

The old man had got up; his eyes glared as his excitement increased, and I confess to having felt very uncomfortable myself.

Look! there he stands!—No! no! You can't see him, but I do. Yes! I see it all over again. I see him rushing madly at those phantom dogs, biting, goring, trampling, shaking them off; and then with one wild rush he broke his bay and ran right up to me—the spirit of my forefathers!—*right through me*, and only a shudder, a dull, trembling, cold, clammy shudder, as on he went. My hair stood on end; my tongue clave to the roof of my mouth—a horrid taste filled it; my knees shook; my heart leaped and bounded against my ribs, and I could not move. On he rushed. I watched him—ay, how I watched him! the great boar's ghost, for now I knew. Back again he came. He kept about the place. In desperation and half crazy myself, I gained strength to strike another blow. My axe passed through him, leaving a large gap, that closed again. My dread increased, and I thought I should have died.—Fifteen dollars, you say!

*The Malagasy wild boar has a large horn-like growth above each tusk.

Nay! not for all the money you have, would I pass that night again. It would mean death now, for I am older, and my heart could not bear the strain, even if that were all.

But there is worse, worse! I wonder I ever lived to tell the tale. The boar had broken bay twice, and was standing for the third time, when I saw two men run into the glade. They were girded tight, and had on the little straw skull-caps we foresters wear. They each had his spear raised, and rushed together towards the boar. I saw their mouths work, but heard no sound. They were both fine tall men, almost of the same height, and very like each other—for were they not brothers? I was then almost in a stupor from long-continued fear. I could neither move nor speak, only look. I wished to cry out, but could not, for I knew they must be the two men, Rainimanga and Rainigapy, whose bodies we had found dead years ago, when I was but a little boy. I knew I should see how it all happened now. I was close to where they passed, but they took no notice of me. As they did so, the same chill ran through me once more, as it had done when the boar passed by. As they ran on, an evil look came over the face of the hindmost. I never saw so fiendish an expression; all the evil passions man is prone to seemed stamped upon that face. Handsome as he was, he looked like a *kinohy*.*

I could see all plainly, for an artificial light lit up both the men and boar. The hideousness of the man's expression increased till he got within a few yards of the boar; then he leaped upon his brother from behind and seized his throat. Ah! what a fearful struggle that was! I shrieked and shrieked; but my mouth was parched, and the scream ended only in an uncertain sound. I tried to run and help, but I could not. I tried to shut my eyes, but I could not. Over and over the two rolled; but the vice-like grip never relaxed. The eyes seemed to start from the head of the one that was held; his face blackened, blood began to trickle from his mouth. It was horrible, horrible! A few moments more and all was over.

The murderer arose, gave one look at the corpse, picked up his spear, rushed at the boar, which still stood at bay. High above his head he raised his spear, poised it, gave it the twisting motion, and then, quick as lightning, threw it. It struck well, just behind the shoulder. With one savage bite, the boar severed the shaft and charged the man. In the murder of his brother he had forgotten his axe. The boar was upon him. One great shock, and his leg was ripped up as he turned to flee. Back again, another rush before he had recovered himself, and the tusks ran into the bone and severed the sinews. The man staggered and fell. He dragged himself slowly; but another rush of the huge animal and his side was open. Then the boar, with bloodshot eyes and staggering gait, ran away to die. I fainted; and when I recovered, it was dawn. For a year I was ill, and have never sat for pig in that glade since.

'That day was the 15th day of the moon, Alahasaty?' I asked.

He nodded.

* A kind of ghostly demon—the half-decomposed body of a man come to life again.

'I think, my dearest father and mother,' I said, 'you must have been asleep.'

Whereupon he shook his head, rose slowly, and departed.

ALLIGATORS AND CROCODILES.

No more striking illustration of the dangers we incur by interfering with the balance of nature could well be cited than the fact that the authorities in some parts of Florida have found it necessary to legislate for the preservation of Alligators. These hideous saurians abound in the Southern Mississippi and its tributaries; and when a use was discovered for their skins, even zoologists were not heard to protest against their speedy extermination. The reason of the prohibition is not far to seek: the cane-rat, which dwells in the swampy banks of the rivers, has increased proportionately with the destruction of the alligators, and threatens ruin to all harvests by the water-side. The result is that the authorities have passed a law forbidding the slaughter of alligators for the space of three years, under a penalty of twenty dollars; or a hundred during the breeding season.

The 'Alligator Mississippiensis' attains its greatest length in Florida, and specimens have been found twenty-three feet long. They do not appear ever to leave fresh water; during the winter they hibernate in the mud on the margins of their haunts. In the neighbourhood of Bazru Zara, on the Mississippi, vast flats of lakes and marshes stretch away on either bank; every year these are flooded by the overflow of the river, when they are visited by myriads of fish. The heat soon partly dries up these lagoons, leaving only about a few feet of water in them, thus exposing a vast amount of prey to the birds and alligators. In the deepest portions, quantities of these imprisoned fish accumulate, and these are known in the country as alligator holes. Thither the horrid reptiles crowd, and as evaporation proceeds, soon exterminate all the captives. Alligators feed principally during the night, when they are said to assemble in large herds, driving the fish before them into the estuaries. Alligators are very numerous in Mexican and Central American waters. The natives of Mexico, when they find an isolated alligator asleep, throw a lasso round its body, and, when secured, gag it. After this, the brute's career is terminated by repeated blows on the head. Another method is practised by the inhabitants of the banks of the Upper Orinoco. A tree is bent—generally, a bamboo is selected, from its elasticity—till the top is brought down to the butt; a bait is then placed on a sharp hook, the line attached to it being fastened securely to the small end of the bent tree, which is caused to relax its position by an ingenious piece of mechanism which gives way the moment the least strain is felt upon the line. The tree-point becoming thus released, straightens itself with great velocity, and drags the caiman from the water.

Various negro tribes place the alligator among their gods. In Madagascar, says the Rev. Mr Ellis, 'the natives invoke their forbearance with prayers, or seek protection from charms, rather than attack them; even the shaking of a spear

over the monsters would be regarded as an act of sacrilegious insult to the guardians of the flood, imperilling the life of the offender the next time he should venture into the water.' In all heathen lands where alligators are found, more or less respect is paid to them, and savages are everywhere reluctant to kill them. According to the natives, they will seize white flesh in preference to black or brown; but a dog is asserted to be the caiman's *bonne bouche*.

The relations in which Crocodiles were regarded by the early Egyptians is not the least puzzling of the many problems that beset the Egyptologist. That they were worshipped is indubitable; yet what are we to make of that strange cemetery where countless thousands are entombed, the spaces between the larger specimens being packed in with eggs and little ones? Such numbers could not have perished naturally; and if they were objects of worship, it is clear they were not allowed to multiply unchecked.

One wonderful fact in the natural history of the crocodile was noticed by Herodotus, and though for a long time regarded as a fable, has been confirmed by modern research. The 'Father of History' tells us: 'When the crocodile takes his food in the Nile, the interior of its mouth is always covered with flies. All birds, with one exception, flee from the crocodile; but this one, the Nile bird, far from avoiding it, flies towards the reptile with the greatest eagerness, and renders it a very essential service. Every time the crocodile goes on shore to sleep, and at the moment when it lies extended with open jaws, the Nile bird enters the mouth of the terrible animal and delivers it from the flies which it finds there. The crocodile shows its recognition of the service by never harming the bird.' The fly alluded to is our common gnat, while the bird is a kind of plover.

Crocodiles are more voracious than alligators. Sir Samuel Baker says that many children fall victims every year on the banks of the Lianiba when their mothers go to fetch water. The crocodile stuns its victim with a blow from its powerful tail, and then drags it into the river, where it is soon drowned. In general, when the crocodile perceives a man, it dives, and furtively glides away from the side which he occupies. Sometimes, on the other hand, it precipitates itself with surprising agility towards the person it has discovered, which may be noticed from the disturbance on the surface of the water.

One of the innumerable curious sights of India is the Nuggar tank of Kurachi. In former times, the crocodiles which inhabit it roamed the neighbourhood at their will, seeking whom they might devour; but so great were their depredations that the authorities were forced to build a wall round their haunt. This is a swamp, caused by hot springs, the medicinal virtues of which have been known from early times, and are attributed to the sanctity of a Mohammedan whose tomb is close by, and to whom the crocodiles are sacred. The tank, as it is called, is about one hundred and fifty yards long by about half that distance in breadth. In this space one observer counted over two hundred reptiles, from eight to fifteen feet long, and smaller ones innumerable. They are so tame, in a sense, that it is necessary to poke them with a stick before

they will move. Buffaloes are always standing in the water, and are not attacked; but any other animal is instantly seized. 'The whole appearance of the place,' says one writer, 'with its green, slimy, stagnant water, and so many of these huge uncouth monsters moving sluggishly about, is disgusting in the extreme, and it will long be remembered by me as the most loathsome spot I ever beheld.'

However necessary it may be to preserve alligators in Florida, there is little doubt that in other parts of the world the destruction of these reptiles would prove an unmixed benefit to the native population, ridding the neighbourhood of dangerous foes, and promoting a trade in the leather thus obtained.

IN THE VALLEY.

To-day, when the sun was lighting my house on the pine-clad hill,

The breast of a bird was ruffled as it perched on my window sill,

And a leaf was chased by the kitten on the breeze-swept garden walk,

And the dainty head

Of a dahlia red

Was stirred on its slender stalk.

Oh, happy the bird at the rose-tree, unheeding the threatening storm!

And happy the blithe leaf-chaser, rejoicing in sunshine warm!

They take no thought for the morrow—they know no cares to-day;

And the thousand things

That the future brings

Are a blank to such as they.

But I, by the household ingle, can interpret the looming clouds,

For the wind 'soo-hoos' through the keyhole, and a shadow the house enshrouds;

And I know I must quit my mountain, and go down to the Vale below,

For my house is chill

On the windy hill,

When the autumn tempests blow.

My mind is for ever drawing an instructive parallel

'Twixt temporal things that perish and eternal things that dwell—

When billows and waves surround me, and waters my soul o'erflow,

I descend in hope

From the mountain top

To the sheltering Vale below.

I go down to the Valley of Silence, where the worldly are never met;

I know there is 'balm and healing' there for eyes that with tears are wet;

And I find, in its sweet seclusion, gentle solace for all my care,

For that Valley pure,

With its shelter sure,

Is the beautiful Vale of Prayer.

NANNIE POWER-O'DONOGHUE.

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A SIAMESE PAGEANT.

By DAVID KER.

THE two great festivals of the Siamese year—the White Elephant's birthday having not yet taken rank there as a Bank holiday—are the birthday of the reigning king, and His Majesty's visit in state to the chief local temples towards the end of autumn. I say 'the king' advisedly, for there is now but one, the office of 'Second King' having recently been abolished on the occasion of the late incumbent's death. This may perhaps be a change for the better, for the duplicate kingship produced at times some rather awkward complications, as in the case of a quarrel between the two monarchs, not many years ago, when the Second King rushed down to the English Consulate and put himself under British protection against the First King; while the First King locked himself up in his bedroom for a week for fear of being murdered by the Second King.

Our stay in Bangkok—which has superseded Siam's ancient inland metropolis, Ayuthia, as St Petersburg superseded Moscow—included both the great national holidays. In September came the birthday of 'the Golden-footed Prince and Lord of the White Elephant,' Prabaht Somdetch P'hra Paramendr Maha Chulalongkorn Klow—may his life be as long as his name!—and a few weeks later followed the 'Visiting of the Temples.'

The birthday celebration was very well worth seeing, though some of its ceremonies were copied too closely from those of European courts not to appear somewhat incongruous in so thoroughly Asiatic a city. It was certainly no joke for us unfortunate Europeans to swelter beneath a tropical sun in full-dress suits of black broadcloth, while waiting to offer our congratulations to the king. It fared even worse with the poor Siamese princes and nobles in their cumbersome dresses of coloured silk, stiff with gold embroidery; that worn by Prince Bhaskarawongse—which he afterwards showed me when I visited

his house—being so heavy that I could barely lift it with one hand.

But the great procession that followed a little later was picturesque enough to have atoned for much more serious hardships. Through the vast paved court-yard of the palace—above which its three successive roofs towered in one great blaze of green and gold—came, marching, to the music of a well-trained military band, a picked body of grenadiers in the uniform of the Siamese line—white frocks and sun-helmets, and blue trousers with a white stripe down the side. Then followed the scarlet jackets, and red horsehair plumes, and fine black horses of the cavalry of the Guard, succeeded by the Foot Guards in dark-blue coats, armed with English rifles. Behind these came the crew of the king's model yacht—about a score of bright young native sailor-lads, who looked very smart and 'ship-shape' in their British man-o'-war jackets. To them succeeded—as my English host observed with a grin—a regiment of genuine *infantry*—that is, several dozen tiny Siamese children, dressed as Highland soldiers—to our no small surprise—in the gay tartan of the Clan Stewart, which set off their solemn little brown faces very picturesquely.

And now a fresh burst of music heralded the arrival of the native grandees, carried by white-robed slaves in carved chairs of ivory or inlaid wood, under the shade of huge many-coloured umbrellas, which reminded us of those that we had seen overshadowing the black royalties of West Africa. Then followed the king's brothers, beneath still larger umbrellas fringed with gold; and finally—with a swarm of richly-dressed attendants before and around him, carrying bundles of rattans across the palms of their outstretched hands—appeared the king himself—a slim, rather good-looking young man of thirty—accompanied by three of his children, among whom the four-year-old Crown-prince is conspicuous by the tiny crown of diamonds which encircles his little top-knot of fuzzy black hair.

Altogether, it was a famous show; and the only drawback to its barbaric splendour was the group

of uncouth creatures in bottle-shaped helmets that guard the outer gate, whose brown, ape-like forms, clad in faded scarlet jackets trimmed with tawdry gold lace, were irresistibly suggestive of an organ-grinder's monkey.

That night both banks of the Me-Nam (Mother of Waters), which forms the main thoroughfare of this amphibious capital, were profusely illuminated, the very ships having every line of their hulls and rigging traced against the darkness in living fire. Conspicuous amid the swarm of crowns, arches, towers, stars, &c. that hovered phantom-like in the dark air, figured a monster letter-box formed by countless tiny jets of fire—symbolising the postal service recently established by the king through the interior of Siam—around which a ring of shining letters wished 'Prosperity to the King and the Postal and Telegraph Union.' A girdle of stars encircled the vast tower of the Wat-Cheng (Elephant Temple) on the right bank; and the tall spear-pointed pagoda that sentinelled the royal mausoleum stood out in one great spire of quivering flame against the vast gulf of blackness, like the red-hot pinnacles of Dante's infernal city glaring through the sunless gloom of the nether world.

A month later came the second and more characteristic of the two great national pageants—the 'Visitation of the Temples' by the king and his court—and, early on the appointed morning, in order to make sure of having a full view of the day's proceedings, we established ourselves, by the advice of a veteran English resident, in the court-yard of the most celebrated temple of all—the far-famed Wat-Cheng.

This eldest and most stately of the great temples of Bangkok is now fast falling to decay, the whole lower part of it being little better than an absolute ruin; for in Siam, as in Burma, no one ever dreams of repairing anything; and when any building—house, temple, or palace—begins to crumble away, the custom is not to restore it, but to build another in its stead. The damp, slimy pavement of the weed-grown court-yard is heaped with the remains of shattered cornices and fallen pillars; and stones, dust, and rubbish have choked up not a few of the small, gloomy cells that form a kind of cloister around the four sides of the quadrangle, which, once tenanted by yellow-robed Buddhist monks with shaven crowns, are now shared by toads and serpents, with gangs of native thieves.

Through one of the countless clefts in these mouldering walls struggles a stray gleam of sunshine, glimmering faintly upon the gilded fragments of the sacred images of Buddha, one of which has a somewhat curious history. Between two blocks of stone in the niche where it used to stand may still be seen a narrow opening, not unlike the slit of a letter-box, into which once fell the offerings dropped through the mouth of the idol by the rich, and subsequently taken

out from behind by the poor, in the belief that the holy image itself sent them the money. But in process of time, when the temple began to decay and to be deserted by its richer worshippers, the contributions gradually ceased; and then the poorer folk, finding that their idol had suspended the payment of his periodical dividends, avenged his remissness by breaking him in pieces on the spot.

This abode of desolation, however, has still some inhabitants of its own, of a very appropriate kind. As you pick your way amid the heaps of ruin, grim-looking warriors start up before you with brandished weapons, and hideous monsters threaten you with greedy fangs and uplifted paws. But no sound issues from the gaping jaws—the ponderous clubs never fall, the menacing claws never strike; all are of cold, hard stone, like the spell-bound guardians of some enchanted palace, awaiting the destined champion whose coming shall arouse them from the torpor of ages.

When you stand at the foot of the great pagoda itself, you seem to be looking up at a mountain of living rainbows, flashing and quivering incessantly like falling water; and it requires some time to grasp all the details of this singular structure, seemingly so magnificent, but really so mean and poor. Around the central tower stand ranged like a life-guard four massive pagodas of the bell-shaped pattern, so universal both in Burma and Siam, each ascended by a steep narrow stair, and all four inlaid with coloured porcelain, while above them a mighty pinnacle springs up into the sky like an embodied prayer, to a height of more than two hundred feet.

At the first glance the blaze of many-coloured splendour that lights up this tower from base to summit might lead one to suppose it thickly set with precious stones, or at least inlaid with the costliest porcelain. But the admiring spectator is grievously disillusionised when he comes nearer to it, and sees that this show of glittering magnificence is produced merely by countless fragments of common earthenware plates dabbed into a thick coating of stucco, like almonds in hard-bake!

Between the sentinel towers, the pyramidal sides of the structure slope upward in one great mass of sculptured archways, painted crockets, carved cornices, and scale-shaped tiles of green and gold, rising terrace above terrace, without order and without end. Ever and anon start up weirdly through this wilderness of gorgeous hues a long line of goblin forms in many-coloured robes and pointed caps, whose uplifted arms seem to support the projecting cornice overhead—intended to represent angels, though their black, misshapen visages and huge tusks make them look more like devils.

In the court-yard of this strange place we posted ourselves on the appointed day, to await the coming of the king and his suite. We had no lack of company, for the whole enclosure, so voiceless and deserted at other times, was now full to overflowing. White-frocked slaves; hel-

meted soldiers; doll-faced Chinamen in huge straw hats; blue-coated Guardsmen; stunted, greasy market-women with hair cropped as short as the bristles of a scrubbing-brush; bare-limbed peasants from the rice-swamps, whose dark skin was covered as with a blue gauze veil by the elaborate tattooing which their superstition believed to be a sure charm against all weapons; and children in the native full-dress of a string of beads round the neck and a brass ring on each wrist—edded around us like a sea.

Thanks to the kindness of the Siamese Cabinet Ministers, room had been made for our party—which included the British Consul and the American ambassador, General H—, on a raised stone platform occupied by themselves, close to the spot where the king was to land; and from this point of vantage we beheld not a few spectacles which, however common in this strange region, would be abundantly startling anywhere else.

Just in front of us halted a native boat, one of the crew of which, while rowing, had held between his toes the 'buri' or native cigar that he had just been smoking, formed of a huge reed stuffed with tobacco. In an open space a little to the rear of the seething crowd around us, a group of supple, slender-limbed native children, with nothing on but a wreath of flowers around their solitary 'head-tuft' of bristly black hair—the cutting of which is to a Siamese boy what the putting on of his first tail-coat is to an English one—were playing a kind of Orientalised lawn-tennis with a ball of palm-pith, which they struck to and fro, not with their hands, but with their feet, using the sole and the instep with equal ease.

A little farther on, a small Siamese cottage of plank and shingle was coming gravely up the river by itself, steered with a huge clumsy oar by its proprietor, who stood on the wooden stair in front of the door with his children around him. One of these—a little mite barely old enough to walk alone—suddenly tumbled overboard, but, apparently not a whit discomposed, coolly swam after his locomotive home, and scrambled up again to the side of his philosophic father, who seemed as little disturbed by this incident as the hero of it himself.

But all at once a buzz of excitement through the crowd, and a general turning of heads up the river toward the palace, warned us that the 'Procession of Barges'—the great show of the day—was just coming in sight. And a gallant sight it was. The king's state barge, which headed the procession, was one blaze of bright paint and gilding throughout its entire length, which was very considerable, for it was rowed by a hundred men, all as gorgeous as tropical butterflies in their uniform of scarlet and blue, which are the royal colours of Siam. Bow and stern alike were one mass of gilding, and twisted into fantastic curves, which glittering in the cloudless sun, might well have been mistaken for the coils of a monstrous snake; and over the stern hung, by way of ornament, the tail of a 'yäk,' the famous 'grunting ox' of Tibet. Near the bow stood a richly dressed personage, who seemed to act as boatswain, and regulated the movements of the oarsmen by thumping against the planks upon which he stood the end of a long bamboo which he held in his

right hand; and just behind him was planted a small cannon, as if to shoot him in case he neglected his duty. After every stroke, all the hundred rowers shot their broad-bladed oars into the air at once, with a sudden jerk, the effect of which—all the oars being profusely gilded—was like that of a flash of lightning.

Just amidships, beneath a small open-sided pavilion loaded with barbaric ornaments, sat the young king himself, with the pagoda-shaped crown of Siam upon his head. This crown is only worn once in three years, which is just as well for the unfortunate wearer, its weight being fully thirty-six pounds English; and were it to fall off, there is no saying what might be the consequence, only one official in the whole realm being empowered to touch the crown, which even the king himself must not do. In fact, the dilemma is the same as that of the luckless king of Spain who was burned to death because the proper officer was not at hand to put him out. Following the king came the boats of the various princes and nobles, similarly decorated, the crews being as gay as a flower-show in their dresses of bright yellow, green, blue, or crimson, to which the dazzling sunshine did full justice. But one and all kept at a respectful distance from the king's barge, it being ordained by law that the crew of any boat daring to run against that which carries the person of Siamese royalty, shall all be beheaded on the spot; and though this humane statute has lately fallen into disuse, the native boatmen had evidently a wholesome fear of seeing it suddenly revived for their especial benefit.

On landing from his barge, the king was borne into the court-yard of the ancient temple upon a kind of litter; but the same distinction was not extended to all his numerous brothers, three or four of whom—strapping lads of fifteen or sixteen—were carried like babies in the arms of their native attendants, with their bare brown limbs dangling down in a queer, helpless fashion that recalled to me how I had once seen the august governor of an African colony dragged out of the surf on to the beach, with his feet higher than his head, by the black hands of three or four stalwart negroes.

As the Lord of the White Elephant went past, the native spectators, to a man, went down on their hands and knees and bowed their faces to the very dust; and at the same instant I myself performed an equally low prostration without intending it. One of the Siamese Ministers—a corpulent old fellow with a broad, heavy, good-humoured face—had just offered me a light open-work iron chair recently imported from Paris, which shut up like a penknife the moment I sat down upon it, and sent me rolling in the dust, to the immeasurable delight of the bystanders. The only thing to be done was to get up again and join in the laugh; but hardly had I done so, when down went the old Minister himself in turn, in precisely the same fashion, and lay sprawling on his back in the dirt, his great bulk and weight making it no easy matter for him to rise again.

How much of this absurd scene the king had witnessed, I cannot tell; but I afterwards learned that he had singled out my wife and myself as new faces in the Ministerial circle—for he was already familiar with those of the Consul and the General—and had asked one of his courtiers who

we were. The latter answered—there being naturally no Siamese equivalent for 'newspaper correspondents'—that we were 'people who made marks on paper'—a not inapt definition of a good many authors of the present day.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER VII.

Henceforth my name has been
A hallow'd memory like the names of old,
A center'd, glory-circled memory,
And a peculiar treasure brooking no
Exchange or currency.

TENNYSON.

'I THINK,' Owen Ludlow said to himself a fortnight later, contemplating his picture with a strange mixture of irritation and amusement, 'that something fresh has been imported into this, besides the recognition in the girl's eyes. It really is hard lines on a fellow to have the whole intention of his work altered in spite of himself, without either with your leave or by your leave; and it's not quite fair on the story which the picture is meant to illustrate. There is not the slightest hint in the mythological dictionaries of any other girl looking at Vertumnus with eyes like that. Recognition indeed! it might have been so a fortnight ago; it means a good deal more now; and it upsets the balance of my picture too, for I don't believe, if Vertumnus had looked away from Pomona for a moment, he would not have been fascinated by those sweet eyes. I think I have made Pomona a shade too unconscious of Vertumnus. I don't believe, beautiful as she is, that in real life such sublime unconsciousness would have had a chance against the feeling in the other's eyes. Those are unconscious, too, of their own meaning, but vividly conscious of him. Pshaw! Why can't I paint as I please? a touch here, a shadow there; and surely one can alter the expression to anything one pleases; but try my hardest, I can't fetch that look out of the girl's face in the picture, any more than I could in real life.'

And here the painter left off contemplating his own picture, to look at another that he could see through the middle window of the large bow, the apple-tree without the fair figure of Pomona, but with Vertumnus smiling down at Sage as he dropped the rosy apples he was gathering from the boughs over her head, into her skirt, held to receive them.

Sage had given a little sigh to herself that first evening of Maurice Moore's arrival; for she thought that Owen Ludlow would no longer care for her company, and the sittings would most likely be discontinued. But Owen would not hear of such a thing; nor, when she came, would he let Maurice slope off along the cliff with his pipe and a novel, as he once or twice made a very mild feint of doing, to leave the sittings undisturbed; and often the painter would cut short the sitting, and propose that they should all adjourn to some favourite haunt of his on cliff or shore; or that Sage should show Maurice the way across the cliffs, or scramble with him across the rocks at low tide to some little bay or cluster of fishermen's cottages.

Altogether, I don't think Owen Ludlow need

have been so much surprised at that look in Sage's face, for if he had been the most designing, match-making mother in society, and Maurice had been the biggest catch in the matrimonial market, and Sage one of six daughters awaiting promotion, he could hardly have thrown them together more artfully. One would have thought that fifty years' experience of life might have taught him what to expect when a young girl was constantly in the company of such a good-looking, agreeable, young fellow as Maurice Moore; and perhaps if there had been a mixture of the tenderer feeling in Owen's friendship for Sage—and, in passing, I must protest against my own use of the word 'tender' as applied specially to love, seeing that friendship is often far tenderer—he would have been more alive to the danger, jealousy being keener eyed and more nearly allied to love than to friendship. But how could he have foreseen, he protested to himself, that Maurice would have looked twice at such a quiet, little thing as Sage, in her shabby serge frock, with her simple shy manners, when he was used to fashionable society, and was continually brought in contact with beautiful and elegant women? Why, ten years ago in California, when he was little more than a boy, he had had more love affairs than Ludlow had thought possible in the course of an ordinary lifetime; and since then, every time he and Ludlow had met there had been some affair of the heart more or less serious, generally less, to relate.

But who would have thought that he would have noticed little Sage? whom Ludlow, fond as he was of her, had never till now thought at all pretty, and who indeed was not so. But now Sage seemed suddenly endowed with something curiously like beauty, whether from the new expression in her face, or from Ludlow seeing her with Maurice's eyes, as one so often sees people and places from another person's point of view, sometimes getting sudden new revelations in this way about faces or scenes one has known for years with a very different impression.

He, certainly—and Maurice told him so plainly—had not done her justice in the picture, and this went to prove that it was not the new expression alone that had beautified her, for that had found its way, against the painter's will, into the picture.

Well, anyhow, the painter told himself, it would soon come to an end. Maurice would have to leave in two days, and the boys' holidays were nearly over; and Sage would go back to London to the old life of ordering dinner and mending the boys' socks, and this would be only a pleasant, bright memory, with Maurice Moore a picturesque figure in the foreground.

It was no use turning crusty now, and making himself disagreeable and spoiling sport for these two last days, and yet that look in Sage's eyes in the picture and in reality made him uneasy, as meaning something more than being 'the summer pilot of an empty heart unto the shores of nothing,' and as showing great possibilities of happiness or heartbreak as circumstances might dictate.

But he was not left long to his reflections that afternoon, for his studio was invaded by a company armed with crooked sticks and baskets and a black kettle of noble proportions, for all the world was going blackberrying to the Landslip,

Mrs Rockett having undertaken to make as much jam as they could find blackberries and jars to contain it.

The Landslip is about three miles along the coast from Scar, where some years ago a large piece of the cliff fell in the night, leaving a great chasm, with rocks and masses of earth heaped up anyhow in very chaotic fashion, which nature, year after year, in her gentle, kindly manner, was trying to restore to order, clothing the torn, rugged blocks with lichen and tufts of fern and trails of ivy, carpeting the hollows with moss, filling up nooks with the stinking iris, which is pretty enough to deserve a prettier name, though I am bound to confess it also merits that one, and which just now was beginning to split its seed-vessels and show the coral berries inside. Some of the trees had come down in the slip from the level of the cliff above, and must have felt sadly shaken, and are in queer positions with twisted trunks, straining to get back to the perpendicular, and over these, and over the young growth of beech and ash saplings and nut-bushes, has been thrown a tangle of rose branches and brambles and clematis, the last enacting the part of old-man's-beard now, instead of the fragrant traveller's joy of the summer.

Here and there, out of the thick undergrowth, rose rocky islands, which had resisted the general downfall, and reared up rough, rugged blocks, as if in defiance of the smoothing influence of nature; and on one of these Ludlow took his seat when his blackberrying ardour had abated, which soon happens at fifty. Sitting up there, he looked, Maurice said, like the cormorant on the tree of knowledge in the garden of Eden, or the little cherub perched up aloft; and from that elevated position he could command the length and breadth of the defile caused by the landslip, and could catch occasional glimpses of the rest of the party among the bushes, or in the little oases of open space, and could hear the boys shouting to one another.

'Oh, I say, come here! here's a jolly lot!'

'Hullo there, Dennis, where have you got to?'

'Kitty, Kitty, come on, can't you?'

Shouts that gradually grew fainter as they went farther down the Landslip.

That idea of the cormorant had naturally suggested to Ludlow's mind that first pair of lovers in Eden; and a glimpse of Maurice and Sage as they passed down a little glade together, fitted in so well with the rest of the picture, that he smiled to himself in half-irritated amusement. They did not seem to be doing much blackberry-gathering. Maurice used his crooked stick to clear the branches out of Sage's path; and sometimes they stood for a few minutes under a bush, which I am sure Kitty or the boys would have gathered a harvest from, and strayed on again without adding one to the very modest heap in Sage's basket.

It was all so new to Sage; the ordinary courtesy of a young man to a girl was as yet quite an unknown thing to her; not that Dr Merriewould ever allow the boys to be rude to her; and he himself treated her with an old-fashioned, chivalrous respect; but the treatment most girls are used to in society, being waited upon and

taken care of, Sage had no experience of; and even Owen Ludlow's treatment had not quite the same flavour.

The situation had not the same novelty to Maurice. As I have said before, he had had many affairs of the heart, and, I am afraid, had often and often gone much further than he did to-day with Sage in the Landslip without the heart being concerned in the affair at all; but there was a charm in little Sage, with this new evanescent beauty about her which love confers; and there was a sort of fitness and tranquil appropriateness about her surroundings that took his fancy and pleased his taste; and fancy and taste make up a large part of many men's hearts, and of some women's, and with them you have to cut down deep through the white sugar and almond paste before you come to the cake itself; and many people think the almond paste the best part of the business.

'Hullo! Hullo! Hullo!' The cormorant on the tree of knowledge is summoning his widely scattered party for tea.

'Tea-time!' Sage exclaims.—'Why! we were not to have tea till five.'

'And now it is half-past,' says Maurice, looking at his watch.

They could hardly believe two whole hours had passed since they reached the Landslip; and they looked a little shamefacedly at their basket, which hardly contained enough blackberries to conceal the bottom.

'We must have upset the basket getting through those bushes,' Sage said.

'Or, perhaps,' he suggested, 'the boys have been along and picked all the blackberries.'

There must be something to account for the emptiness of the basket.

'Coo-ee! Coo-ee!' The painter's sonorous voice rings out, and is echoed among the rocks, and brings back an answering shout from far-away Dennis and Nigel and Will; and a shrill little 'Coo-ee' from Kitty, nearer home.

They have all much farther to come back than Sage and Maurice; and yet, when these two loiterers arrive at the great flat slab of stone on which the fire has been built up, they find all the others collected, and a brisk fire burning under the kettle, hung in gypsy fashion on sticks over the blaze. Gypsy teas have been so numerous since they came to Scar, that the children are all quite equal to the occasion, and none of the catastrophes happen that used to be so frequent at first—important articles such as matches forgotten, damp wood, upset kettle, smoky water, and ant-hills chosen for seats. To-day, the spot chosen was most judicious, as the smoke curled away up between two upright stones that formed a natural chimney, and did not come straight in the faces of the party, as often happened.

Sage had arrived too late on the scene to undertake her usual office of unpacking the baskets and making the tea, as the boys had undertaken the former duty with great bustling; and Kitty was presiding over the teapot with much importance, and resentment at any interference.

So Maurice found Sage a seat among the mossy stones, where she sat at ease. She had taken off her hat; and her head with its soft plaits, from which little rings escaped wherever they got the

chance, was resting back on a cushion of moss. There was a little colour in her usually pale cheeks, and a soft radiant light in her eyes, and such a look of great content when Maurice settled himself at her feet, that Ludlow's uneasy feelings revived, and his attention was so distracted that he let the kettle boil over and scalded his finger. He cast such wrathful glances at Maurice, that that young reprobate, out of mischief, threw still greater *empressement* into his manner to the girl, and looked up at her with more sentiment in his dark eyes, and sank his voice to a softer, more confidential tone, so that the painter could not hear the words, which were matter-of-fact enough, but only the tone, which was lover-like.

September days are short, so the sun was setting before tea was done, glorifying the whole place with crimson light, shooting shafts of liquid gold between tree-trunks, bringing out wonderful tints, deepening blue shadows, sharpening outlines, and, overhead, sprinkling the sky with little pink butterfly clouds, turning golden as they neared the west. It was one of those exceptionally beautiful sunsets that come now and then to make us look up from the mud and above the brick walls which bound our view in ordinary life.

Ludlow's attention was distracted from his displeasure with Maurice, and Maurice ceased to wish to aggravate Ludlow; the children left off wrangling over their blackberries, and even the boys sat with their knees drawn up to their chins, staring at the gorgeous panoply; and Sage, leaning back luxuriously on her mossy cushion, felt that the loveliness was almost more than she could bear; but with her, poor child, I think anything seen as that was, over Maurice Moore's dark head, would have seemed beautiful, and life a dream of happiness, with him sitting at her feet.

When the spell was broken at last, when the boys jumped to their feet, clattering plates and cups in preparation for packing, and the painter stretched himself and said they ought to be getting under way, and Maurice got up and began rolling a cigarette, Sage drew her breath sharply with almost a sob in it, as if she had been drinking in the beauty breathlessly. If every one would have sat still, if Nigel had not suddenly flung up his heels in the air, and Will tried to balance a saucer on his nose, it seemed to her as if those ecstatic moments of sunset might have been prolonged indefinitely; but the stir seemed to end it; the sun dipped petulantly behind a cloud, and immediately the colours began to die and deaden, and the shadows grow ashen and dull; and a mist became apparent, rising from the bottom of the Landslip where the irises grew.

'We are going home over the cliffs,' Kitty said, taking possession of the painter's arm; 'and you are going to tell us all about that prairie fire from the very beginning.'

So Ludlow, who had meant to act the dragon on the way home, and keep Sage tucked under his arm, was marched off with Kitty on one side and Nigel on the other, and Dennis and Will circling round, or walking backwards in front of him.

So Ludlow had to resign himself to circumstances, and presently got so interested in his

story, that he did not think of Sage and Maurice till he reached the path leading down into Scar, when he became conscious they were far away behind, only dimly to be made out in the moonlight on the cliff.

There was some excuse for loitering on such a night, with that broad rippling silver band drawn across the dark sea, and the great, gentle moon beaming down at them, with a soft bright star to share her solitude in the quiet blue vault. From the shore below, the wash of the waves on the beach hardly broke the silence, which was so deep that they could hear the sheep cropping the short grass on the cliff behind them.

Maurice had been helping Sage to climb a steep little bit of the path—Sage, who had never been helped over any rough or steep bits of life before, having generally to drag or push some one else through difficulties—and he did not leave go of her hand when the steep part was passed, but kept it in his, and held it still as they stood looking at the moonlit sea.

He was telling her, with a regret in his tone that was infinitely sweet to her ear, though his words themselves were of the parting that made her heart sink, of his going away to the noisy, restless, society life, to the pretence and push and unreality, to the heart-burnings and jealousies, to the petty spite and paltry ambitions. He spoke of it all with such contempt and weariness, that no one could have imagined, least of all that most credulous listener whose little hand thrilled in his, that he had found this life very endurable a few weeks ago, and most probably would return to it without too great repugnance before many days were over. But he really did mean it at the time very heartily, quite as much, and perhaps more than he had meant many another tender little sentiment or softly murmured compliment in other equally romantic situations as this on the quiet cliff, with the great stretch of sea, 'that moving seems to sleep,' before them, with the broad silver stripe of moonlight across it.

So also he meant it entirely when he bent nearer to her and clasped her hand more tenderly and said: 'I shall never forget this happy time at Scar. It has been the happiest fortnight of my life.—Sage, will you forget me quite when I am gone?'

He had never called her Sage before; and from that moment the name was altered to her, sweetened, glorified, so that she could never hear it from the most indifferent lips, or write it in the most commonplace business of life, without feeling a little thrill of pleasure.

She did not answer his question. How could she, with her heart beating in such great happy throbs? But perhaps it did not want great self-assurance or conceit on Maurice's part to guess what the answer would have been, from the tremble of the hand in his, and the eloquent silence of the small face so fair in the moonlight.

After all, what had he said, and what had he done to feel any compunction about? he asked himself with irritation when he had parted from her at the cottage door, when the children's noisy narrative of the events of the day to Mrs Rockett, and display of the blackberries they had amassed, cut short the parting, and made it too public for

tenderness. It was only that he had meant it a little more, and she had believed it a little more than had happened on other occasions, when he had had a turn at that fascinating sport of fencing which we call flirtation, a charming diversion, elegant and amusing, and no harm in it, thrust and parry, point and tierce. But have a care! All of a sudden the button is off the foil; the game is turned into deadly earnest, the elegant diversion ends with a death-wound.

'Pshaw!' he said, impatiently, 'where's the harm?'

And yet, as he came into the studio, where the painter sat smoking, with a book in his hand, he felt unaccountably ashamed, and inclined to be apologetic.

THE BIRTH OF THE MECHANICAL POWERS.

THE tendency of modern research is to establish the proposition that human society is an organism which has grown to a complex form out of simple beginnings. It is difficult for the trained intellect of to-day to form a mental picture of the untrained intelligence of the earliest men, and the language in which we express that primary mental condition does not convey exact notions to the mind. It is harder to imagine than to describe a mind with no logical thought, and no knowledge of natural facts, still harder to conceive with what slowness any progress ever took place. Yet, as we travel back upon the historic past into the region of pre-history, we at length encounter men around whom and in whom there played physical forces of which they had no comprehension. Logical inference supports written tradition in saying that the remotest men had to start in life with no stock in trade but a group of faculties which as yet were wholly undeveloped.

These earliest men found themselves environed by the facts of life; and it was the observation, not only of natural events, but of the ways of other sentient beings, and themselves, which first taught them the rudiments of mechanics. There is a fable which, like most, has a philosophic basis, that men first learned the art of swimming by watching the instinctive actions of a young frog. A popular writer published some years ago a collection of instances in which human inventions were anticipated by the blind instinct of beasts or herbs, and has shown, for example, that the aquatic plant known as *Utricularia* applied the principle of the crab-pot ages before ever an archaic fisherman caught crabs by that means. And there is no doubt that in many cases the slow, half-intelligent perception of the methods adopted in Nature for achieving mechanical results was one chief source of instruction for the earliest engineers.

The axiom that example is better than precept is one which has exerted an immense influence upon social evolution, and that influence made itself felt in two ways. Some particular man would happen to do a certain thing, probably by accident, and others who noticed it would be at once filled with the desire to imitate it. In certain French watering-places, three or four years ago, there arose a fashion amongst the women of

wearing gloves of different colours—for instance, a black glove on the right hand and a white glove on the left. This practice owed its birth to the fact that at a certain concert early in the year a leader of fashion appeared in the room wearing odd gloves in this way. She had put them on unconsciously, and was horrified when she discovered her blunder; but the other women present at once imagined that this was the new *mode*, and it was instantly adopted. In ways just as accidental, individuals who had acquired a reputation for special wisdom or aptitude would in early societies become at once objects of minute imitation.

All mechanical labour must in the nature of things start from the foundation afforded by the human hand. But men would live in the world a very short time before beginning to see that many mechanical enterprises required a greater hand-power than that of a single man. The inference suggested by a study of the human remains of the glacial drift is that, from the very first, men turned themselves into a sort of compound machine by pulling together. Two facts conspired to impart to this act a peculiar development. The innate distaste of men to use their own hands on the one side, and the need for disposing of prisoners taken in war on the other, would, in an age of physical struggle, when one race could hope to exist only by effacing another, lead conquering tribes to utilise the accumulated energy of living captive men. In this sense it may be said that the first machine ever invented was a slave-gang, and the first engineer its taskmaster.

But besides the energy obtained from men, early engineers were not slow to utilise the power stored up in other animals. There is evidence that even in the palæolithic age the art of domesticating animals was already in vogue; and one of the earliest scratched bones extant—the remote precursor of all pictorial art—represents a man in the act of guiding a rude lopped pole, drawn by a horse, as a sort of primitive plough. The fact that in the Danish 'kitchen-middens,' or rubbish-heaps, all the marrow bones are found to be split and gnawed, is regarded as proof of the existence at that time of a breed of domestic dogs. The ass, also, as far back as Semitic traditions go, was a beast of burden in Western Asia. When it is remembered that the ass is regarded as capable of five times the work that can be done by a man, and that the horse is ten times as powerful as a man, it will at once be perceived that the adoption of these animals as prime movers would add immensely to the mechanical capabilities of early engineers.

The precise relative date at which water-power first came into use cannot be asserted. Amongst the remains of the Stone Age, from the earliest to those which, from their superior finish and more perfect adaptation, are thought to be later in point of time, there is no class more frequent than that of mortars and pestles. Sandstone blocks, or querns, bearing hollows which have about them the aspect of having been formed by the pounding of corn upon them, have been often found, and the whole inference is supported by other considerations that during the age of Stone the water-wheel as an agent for grinding corn

was not yet invented. The utilisation of human energy involved in the grinding of corn by hand was in fact replaced by that of quadrupeds long before horse and bullock power gave way to water-power. Cattle-mills, for instance, were in use amongst the Romans at an early date. It is difficult to suppose that the first inventors of the water-wheel used it for any purpose other than grinding, and the inference is that mills driven by this power were of relatively late origin. There is reason to believe that the Egyptians had water-wheels in use in very early times; and one is known to have been erected on the Tiber in the century before Christ. The first water-mill known in history is that described in connection with the Mithridatic wars. The tide-wheel is of quite recent origin, none being recorded earlier than those used by the Venetians in 1078 A.D.

Windmills, also, were not known in Europe before the twelfth century, but are believed to have been in use in the East before this time. A sawmill is recorded to have been in use in Augsburg in 1332. The fact that of all modern African races not one has ever hit upon either water-power or wind-power seems to prove that they involve a knowledge of advanced kinematics not attained by any races out of the track of the early civilisations.

Although the property of rubbed amber was perceived by Thales as early as the seventh century before Christ, yet it need scarcely be said that heat and electricity, as practical prime movers, are developments of the past two hundred years.

Let us now examine one by one, in the order of their birth, the mechanical powers which are described as the simple machines. Here it may be observed that whereas some of the lower animals do possess a knowledge of individual powers, yet, if those particular powers fail, they are incapable of carrying out their desires by other means. Monkeys, for instance, fetch themselves cocoa-nuts and break them open at the same time by running up the palm-trunks and dropping the nuts to the ground. But if a nut should fall intact, the monkey would not have the cleverness to pick up a stone and break it; nor has it the aptitude to throw a stone upwards, and so bring the nut to the ground. Both these actions would imply the pre-requisite of an opposable thumb. Similarly, a beaver will drag a tree-trunk to the river-side, that it may be built into the beaver-dam; but if the trunk be too heavy, it will not have the power to put one trunk on another, and so roll the trunk along.

It is in this capacity for inventiveness that the divergence of human aptitude from that of animals is to be found. Thus, there is no record of any brute creature ever deliberately and of set purpose transporting a weight from one point to another by rolling it down a hill. Yet the savage race does not exist which is incapable of this simple exercise of the inventive mind. Again, there is no record of a savage who would not be smart enough to drag one trunk over a smaller one, and so lessen the friction of transport. It may be taken for granted that the roller, in the form of a pole from which lateral branches had been lopped by cutting, breaking, or fire, was one of the earliest mechanical inven-

tions. It would not be long before men perceived that by reducing the bulk of the trunk in the middle, the power of the roller was increased, because friction was reduced, and in this way the middle part of the roller would at length develop into the axle, and its two ends into wheels. There is no evidence that trolleys or carts of this rough pattern existed amongst the men of the Stone Age, and the theory that they had not yet been invented is strengthened by the fact that stone implements would have been incompetent to fashion a wheel. The earliest Chaldean monuments bear sculptured representations of rude wood-carts with two fixed wheels drawn by a single ox; but these very sculptures themselves prove that metallic tools were in use at the time.

The lever must be quite as old as the roller. When several felled poles lay together helter-skelter, one of them would most likely have one of its ends resting under another, and accidental depression of the free end would reveal the fact that heavy weights might be moved by pushing under them one end of a pole, and pushing under the pole another by way of fulcrum. The transport of heavy weights, therefore, might take place quite naturally amongst the men who preceded the metallic age by the use of poles as levers and rollers. At that stage nothing in the way of a crank or axle would have been known. The lever, like other powers, was of course known long before its properties had been investigated by the mathematician. It was, in fact, not until the time of Archimedes that the lever was explained.

It may be useful here to point out that in the pre-metallic age, before nails were possible, fastenings were effected by means of knots. The older stone implements are distinguished from those of the newer age by having been lashed to a wood-shaft with leather thongs; whereas, later on, men found out how much better it was to make a hole, either in the stone head or in the wooden handle. The fact that stone implements are found scattered singly here and there seems to suggest that they had slipped by accident out of the shafts through unskillful tying; and from this we may infer that the granny-knots and other unscientific methods of tying which children instinctively adopt are a relic of the Stone Age fastenings.

From the position in which their remains are found, it may be said that the Stone Age races of Western Europe obtained their supplies of fresh water from running streams and lakes. They would therefore have no knowledge of artificial wells, which seem to have been hit upon by Syrian nomads in very early times. At first, perhaps, vessels would be lowered by a thong, and then pulled up again; but if a pole were placed across the well-mouth for purposes of safety, men would at once see the advantage of pulling the rope against the pole. Later on, they would acquire the means of fixing the pole in the holes of vertical boards, and so the pulley would arise. Even before this invention, it is probable that men hit upon the plan, when dragging a heavy weight by means of a leather thong, of passing the thong round some handy tree.

The precise manner in which the wedge was invented cannot be shown. Perhaps some archaic

workman, hammering away at a block of wood with a flint knife, found the knife enter the wood and become fixed. In the effort to wrench it out, the block would split. This theory is strengthened by the fact that the invention of the axe and the wedge is ascribed to Daedalus. Such a belief on the part of the Greeks was but one way of saying that those implements had been handed down from a time which to them was one of remote antiquity; and the juxtaposition of the axe and wedge is a confirmation of the idea that both originated under one set of circumstances.

While the engineer of to-day is a being of a very different stamp from the engineer of the long-ago, the difference is one of degree rather than kind. Modern mechanical activity has shown itself not in the invention of new machines so much as in the application of new prime movers. The tendency of the time is to replace the prime movers of the early ages by others involving less human waste. The classic trireme was to all intents and purposes a ship propelled by a compound engine, whose cranks were human elbows, and whose pistons were human arms. A rower would not miss his stroke more frequently than the needle of a sewing-machine misses a stitch. But the comparative costliness of men as prime movers has been amply demonstrated by the calculation that, to do the same number of units of work as that produced by the motor of a Cunarder not fewer than a quarter of a million rowers would be required.

But enough has been said in these brief notes to show that, before the age of Iron, men had made considerable progress in mechanical invention, and it needed only the introduction of that metal to enable them to carry out the principles already known to gigantic issues.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—IN THE 'CORNER.'

THE interval till Monday, Suffield spent in peace. He did not think it was worth his while to waste his strength in travelling to London and back in that brief time, even to have the pleasure of seeing and taking counsel with his wife. On Sunday he went to church, and then in and out among his own people, cheering the young, and gossiping with and comforting the aged: he understood his own folk and their rudely affectionate ways better than he did those of the south country.

On Monday his anxiety and trouble began, which were to last till the month ended. He was the simple-minded, honest kind of man—as I have elsewhere remarked—who, when once he suspects, entertains an uncompromising distrust. He disliked and suspected Gorgonio, and therefore he believed it was impossible for Gorgonio, of his own motion, to deal honestly in any business. When he found, on visiting the Indian cotton in dock, that Gorgonio had spoken truth when he had said it was worth no more than twopence a pound, he merely thought it was one of those cases which frequently occur, when the habitual liar has not told a lie only because it was not

worth his while, and he distrusted Gorgonio the more for his having told the truth on one occasion. When Gorgonio asked what should be done with the cotton?—should it be warehoused and sold by parcels?—Suffield suspected him of some ulterior purpose—he would have found it difficult to say what—in making the suggestion.

'No,' said he. 'Sell the rubbish off at once. It's worth no more than twopence; and if we can get twopence for it, let us be thankful.'

But they did not get twopence for it. Twopence was very cheerfully given at first; but when still more was offered and more pressed upon the market 'without reserve,' buyers—a suspicious folk—began to think the cotton must really be worse than the samples indicated; so they refused to give twopence; and before the lot was cleared out a penny was reached. And Gorgonio laughed to himself—for he had secretly bought in a considerable quantity of it at a penny—and exclaimed: 'This is beautiful way to do business! The Suffiel' *père* is old fool!'

But Suffield was no fool: he was only consumed by dislike of the whole business, and distrust of Gorgonio. It worried and wore him beyond measure that the 'unloading' of 'corner' responsibilities must be entrusted to Gorgonio. It chafed him so much when he sat in his office that he had to get up and take the train to Liverpool 'to see how the Asiatic scamp was getting on.' He would even hang about among the busy crowd on the Liverpool flags—a very notable and half-forlorn-seeming figure—with a kind of watchful eye on Gorgonio; and in the troubled watches of the night he dreamed horribly of Gorgonio—who more and more looked as if he had been buried in some noisome place and, after some time, had been dug up again—of his hideous, pendulous, pitted nose, and his active pig's eyes.

And Gorgonio felt he was disliked and distrusted, and saw he was under such surveillance as the simple Suffield could bring to bear. Under no circumstances was Gorgonio a sweet-tempered and forgiving creature; but under these he became vindictive and reckless—reckless of his backer's interests, and reckless even in a measure of his own. By the following Monday, when prices were 'struck' for the week, not more than twenty thousand of the two hundred thousand bales of contracts had been got rid of; and prices had gone down, so that difference would have to be paid on one hundred and eighty thousand bales! On Tuesday afternoon, Gorgonio came to Suffield and set before him, with an ill-disguised satisfaction, the reckoning which would have to be met on Thursday, the 'settling day.' Mr Suffiel' must make out a cheque—to be paid into the cotton bank—for a considerable number of thousands!

'This must come to an end!' said Suffield, when he had made out the cheque. 'This repeated much would ruin any man!'

'How can any man make it end, Mr Suffiel'?' said Gorgonio. 'The more you sell out, the more will the prices go down!—down! It cannot help itself!'

So the days passed, and George did not return; and with waiting and worry his father began to look worn and aged: his hair turned grayer, and his cheek lost its wholesome ruddiness. It added immensely to his trouble that, under George's

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rule, the interests of the Suffield business had been sacrificed to the demands of this extraneous speculation, and that proper business payments had been half-met or postponed, to permit of money being diverted to cotton transactions.

It was impossible that the change passing upon Suffield and the load of anxiety he bore—he was of those to whom concealment was well-nigh impossible—should not be observed in so well known and remarkable a figure as his. Speculation as to reasons became common. Where was his son?—shipped off because he had run the rig pretty freely? And why did he so frequently journey to Liverpool?—and appear—as was said—on ‘the Flags?’ Men discussed these points as they saw him on ‘Change, as they sat at lunch over against him, and when he passed them in the streets. Whispers went round, and doubts began to gather: Was the house of Suffield becoming shaky? Was he there to stave off reverses brought upon the house by the ignorance and carelessness of his son? A foolish thing that was he had done, in putting his son in complete charge of the business, and going off himself to London, to swell about—oh yes! everybody knew his wife was an ambitious woman!—among London nobles in Parliament and Society! Suffield was a ‘very good sort;’ but he would come to grief yet, through his good-nature and his wife’s ambition!—Suffield saw these things in the looks and heard them in the tones of men, and understood only too well how they might help to bring a more untoward end about. And yet he could do nothing but wait and endure till the end came, putting his shaky trust in ‘that rascal Gorgonio.’

A diversion came at the end of the week. Telegrams were published in all the newspapers—in the Liverpool papers in large type—proclaiming that there had been a great fire on the quays of Savannah, in which some warehouses filled with cotton ready for shipment had been completely destroyed. The extent of the loss was not known, but the immediate result in Liverpool was the raising of the prices of cotton. Thereupon he wrote at once to Gorgonio: ‘Seize this favourable opportunity to sell out as much as ever you can;’ and then he was ashamed that he should be pleased to take advantage of a disaster which perhaps meant ruin to some.

Early next week—which was the third of the crisis—he was surprised and troubled by an anonymous letter from Liverpool. It was signed ‘One who knows,’ and it advised Mr Suffield to put no trust in Gorgonio, who was playing him false: he was working ‘both on the bull and on the bear tack;’ it was to his interest to sell little at present, and then to send down prices with a rush at the end of the month, in the endeavour to clear out. That troubled Suffield very much; for must it not have been written by some one in Gorgonio’s confidence or in Gorgonio’s office? Who else should know that Suffield had such dealings with Gorgonio? Suffield went to Liverpool to see Gorgonio, and found that part at least of the anonymous communication was true; for Gorgonio had sold comparatively little, in spite of Suffield’s urgent instruction after the news of the fire in Savannah. Then Suffield was very wroth.

‘You are not keeping faith with me, Mr

Gorgonio,’ said he. ‘I agreed to carry out my son’s compact about money, and you on that understanding agreed on your part to work off these responsibilities as quickly as possible!’

‘And, Mr Suffield, I do work them off as quickly as possible.’

‘What, you villain!’ exclaimed Suffield. ‘And this last time, with everything in your favour, you have sold something less than ten thousand, notwithstanding my express instructions to get rid of as many as possible!’

‘What would you have, Mr Suffield?’ cried Gorgonio, with a snarling reasonableness. ‘First you say, “Do not sell at low price!” Then you say, “Sell so many as possible!” But if I sell many as possible, I must sell at low price, because price go down under great many. Well, what? Which? I cannot please you both way! I am not two person—twice—double! I am not what you call ambidextrous! I am not amphibious! I am not hermaphrodites! No!—Try to sell both way yourself, Mr Suffield! I am willing!’

What, then, could Suffield say or do? What could he do but fume within himself, and fret, because he was certain this man was playing him false, though he could not refute his plausible arguments? And the worst of it was—the most galling and intolerable thing!—that he must still continue tied to this man till the end of the business.

It was at that time it first became evident to Suffield that the business world in which he lived and moved was aware of his cotton entanglements. As matter of fact, the shrewd Lancashire men, whose care it was to be ‘up to’ all the moves of the complex commercial game, had for some time truly guessed what was the nature of the unworthy connection of the Suffield house with a man like Gorgonio. The disappearance, moreover, of Tanderjee—who, it was known, had had business relations with the younger Suffield—and of Daniel Trichinopoly—who had been his creature—and then of George himself, could not, and did not, fail to be remarked and interpreted. In one way and another, a tolerably accurate knowledge of the situation was common property; insomuch that, while the older and more staid men refused to believe that a man of Suffield’s commercial probity and honour would encourage so speculative and disreputable a thing as a corner, many of the younger and more light-minded—who knew not Suffield—believed he was still trying to hold the corner for his absent son, and betted on ‘the old man’s’ power to hold out.

Under these disquieting circumstances, it is not surprising that creditors of the house of Suffield—men who commonly would have never thought of pressing for payment—urged their accounts upon the attention of Mr Suffield, who bravely met their demands and wrote them cheques, till his account at the bank began to run to fewer figures than it had been wont. And still he sought assistance or advice of no-one, but sat alone in his sturdy and cheery stoicism. One morning—and this was the first event that absolutely convinced him his world was in possession of his secret—‘Mr Poynting’ was announced. Mr Poynting was the head of a firm of engineers who had for many years made all the Suffield machinery, and to whom a large

bill had fallen due. Had Mr Poynting called about that bill?—The heart of Mr Suffield sank.

'Don't be frightened of me, Suffield,' said Mr Poynting. 'I'm not intruding on you as a creditor; I'm come to see you as an old friend. To come to the point at once—you'll forgive me if I'm wrong—you are, or may be soon, pressed for money. Will ten thousand pounds for a year, or a couple of years, be of any use to you? If it will be of any use, you can have it, and welcome, my friend.'

Suffield was so moved by that generous and spontaneous offer of aid that he could not speak for a moment.

'Thou'rt good, Poynting!' said he. 'Very good! I thank tha heartily, but I mun fend for mysen! Had it been a disaster o' Providence that brought me to this I mowt ha' said different, but I ha' brought it on mysen, and I mun wrastle through it by mysen; thank yo' all th' same, Poynting.'

'I ha' understood,' said Mr Poynting, 'that it was your son backed up this attempt at a corner, unbeknown to you.'

'Oh, they say that, do they?—My poor lad! There's not many to say a good word for him now, I daresay; though I reckon they were all "Hail-fellow" wi' him when he was about.—Yes; th' foolish lad thought he was going to do a great stroke. "He that maketh haste to be rich,"' he continued, exercising his agreeable faculty for incorrect quotation, "falleth into speculation and a snare!" Th' owd way's best! I don't hold wi' these new-fangled dodges for making money. There's no real work or wealth in them. But th' lad's away trying hard to clear off a bit of his mistake, and I'm bound to see him out of it—though it's a more serious job than I thought it would be.'

'I don't hold wi' speculation myself,' said Mr Poynting, 'and corners in anything are, I think, execrable.—But isn't it a pity, Suffield, to let all this cotton go, as they tell me it's going, at poor rates? Take the ten thousand, if it's any help to you, and hold on to the last day for a rise; and then you'll be out of it with a pound or two in your pocket.'

'Thank yo' again, Poynting; but th' cotton mun go. And I'd far rather I lost than other folk. I'll not ha' it said about me that I made a penny out of so detestable a thing as a corner! My only concern now is to save th' business; and I think I can save it—though I may ha' to go and live in a cottage again.'

'Well, Suffield,' said Poynting with resignation, 'you know th' saying: "There's nought so queer as folk." A wilful man mun ha' his way. But if you should think better o't, let me know.'

'Thank yo' again, friend,' said Suffield. 'I'll not forget; I'll remember it a' my days! And he wrung his friend's hand as he went away.'

A little later he was surprised by a visit from a bank official. The official desired to communicate a very delicate and peculiar matter of business. 'You may know or remember,' said he, 'that we were asked by Mr Suffield, junior, to trace fourteen Bank of England notes for five hundred pounds.'

'I remember,' said Suffield. 'You telegraphed to my son in London about twelve of them.'

'We have now,' said the official, 'traced another—traced it to a person in Liverpool named Gorgonio, with whom, I believe, you have dealings, Mr Suffield, and who certainly had dealings with Mr Suffield, junior, and the original holder of the note.'

'You mean Tanderjee?—I was convinced that Gorgonio was a scoundrel!'

'Precisely. Of course, that person may have received it from Tanderjee in the ordinary way of business, or he may not. It would be difficult, we think, Mr Suffield, to show that he did not; but we thought you would like to know the fact.'

Yes; Mr Suffield saw it would be difficult to show there was anything improper in Gorgonio's possession of a five hundred pound note which had passed from the hand of Tanderjee.

'I hope, Mr Suffield,' said the official, 'that this cotton business of Mr Suffield, junior, goes well now?'

'Thank you,' said Suffield; 'but it won't go well till it's gone altogether!'

A PATRIOT'S HOME AND TOMB.

GREAT HAMPDEN—OR Hampden Magna, as it is officially termed, to differentiate it from the village of Little Hampden—is situated on high land among the Chiltern Hills. The place possesses at least two distinctive characteristics in addition to its connection with the patriot, John Hampden. There is neither river nor brook to be seen in the parish; and there is no assemblage of houses that can be styled a village, in the generally accepted term of the word. Instead of Great Hampden village, Hampden Row is the designation of the farmsteads and cottages, which are picturesquely scattered along the side of a somewhat large common. The undulating country around Great Hampden is finely wooded, chiefly with beech-trees, which are indigenous to the soil; but there are also many unusually large and beautiful chestnut, cedar, balm-of-Gilead, fir, and lime trees.

Before the time of the patriot, the manor of Hampden had been the property of his forefathers for several centuries. Baldwyne, the owner of the manor in the reign of Edward the Confessor, and Osbert his successor, in the reign of William the Conqueror, are stated to have been ancestors of the Hampden family. The following record is said to be copied from a vellum roll which chronicles the pedigree and alliances of the Hampdens, and bears the date of 1579: 'The manor of Hampden hath contynned in the possession of one race of gentlemen by the space of more than six hundred years, who takyne their name of the place whereof they were Lordes, grew thereupon to be called by the second name of Hampden.' This triple-centuried archive also narrates that, when Osbert was Lord, William the Conqueror gave the manor to one of his followers named William Fitz-Ansculf; but Osbert, 'whether it were by monney or some other means of friendship, so purchased the good-will of the said William Fitz-Ansculf that he suffered the said Osbert to contynue in quiet possession of his

said Lordshippe of Hampden.' It is considered that the village of Hampden, written thus, H—den, is mentioned in Doomsday Book. Baldwin de Hampden, the son of the above-mentioned Osbert, is recorded to have held the manor in the reign of Henry I.

The present residence of the Hampdens is believed to occupy partly the site of the ancient mansion; portions of which, discovered when the building was modernised in the middle of the last century, are said undoubtedly to have dated from the reign of King John. There is a tradition that this monarch visited Hampden House, and one of the apartments, in the north-west front, is still known as King John's Room.

Queen Elizabeth, during her many progresses through her dominions, seems to have left few country-houses of note unvisited. Hampden House is no exception to the rule. Her Majesty's sojourn there is twice commemorated. The bedstead is shown in which she slept; and an avenue called the Queen's Gap, we are told, was cut through the surrounding woods by her entertainer, Griffith Hampden, that his exalted guest might approach his abode by a new and impressive route. This glade, nearly a mile in length, leads in a direct line to the house, from which, through the vista, a beautiful view is seen of the open country beyond.

Hampden House is not wanting in distinction and dignity. It is embattled; a handsome centre and two wings compose the north-west front; and the south-west front is surmounted with a square tower. The building is, however, much spoilt by its having been covered with stucco. The interior is less imposing than the outside leads one to anticipate, the rooms being comparatively restricted in size. Two portraits of the patriot are pointed out amongst the pictures, but their originality seems doubtful. A full-length portrait of Oliver Cromwell, with a page tying his sash, appears better authenticated. The Protector, it will be remembered, was John Hampden's first-cousin, their mothers having been sisters.

Southward of the Queen's Gap, in the woods between Hampden and Missenden, is a place called Prestwood. This is stated to be the identical spot upon which the ship-money tax was levied which Hampden refused to pay, and for which he was tried—the trial in fact bringing about in the end the great civil war.

Great Hampden Church, the burial-place of the patriot, is dedicated to St Mary Magdalene. It is an ancient structure of flint and stone, disfigured, like the house, by a covering of stucco. It consists of a chancel, nave, and aisles. Authorities say that various styles of architecture prevail. They tell us that the nave arcades belong to the Decorated period; the chancel and the upper portion of the small embattled tower to the Perpendicular; whilst the lower portion of the tower is Early English. The church contains some interesting relics of medievalism. An age-worn stoup for holy-water arrests the attention in the large, stone-seated, south porch; on either side of the chancel arch there is a hagioscope; and a piscina is in a well-preserved condition. In most restored churches of pre-Reformation date we see the piscina in the chancel, and often also in the transepts, where side-chapels were once

located. The piscina is a small recess in the walls, furnished with a drain, reaching to the foundations, down which the sacred rinsings of the eucharistic chalice were poured. Hagioscopes, however, are seemingly rarer records of Roman Catholic England. It may not, therefore, even in these days of wide-spread general knowledge be an altogether familiar fact that a hagioscope is an oblique opening in the interior walls of a church, through which the high-altar was visible to the worshippers in the side-aisles.

The last resting-places of many of the Hampden race are marked by brasses on the chancel floor, the oldest of which dates from 1496. The brass covering the grave of Griffith Hampden, the host of Queen Elizabeth, occupies a central position before the altar. Later members of the Hampden family are memorialised by mural tablets. The only noticeable one, upon the left wall of the chancel, commemorates both the illustrious patriot and his last descendant in the male line. The inscription upon the monument is as follows: 'John Hampden, XXIII hereditary Lord of Great Hampden, and Burgess for Wendover in three Parliaments. Dyed unmarried February 4, MDCCLIX, aged 58. Having bequeathed his estate and name to his kinsman, the Hon. Robert Trevor (now Hampden), son of the Right Hon. Thomas Lord Trevor, son of the Right Hon. Sir John Trevor by Ruth, daughter of John Hampden, slain in Chalgrove Field, MDCXLIII. Robert Hampden dedicated this Monument, with all due veneration, to his Great grandfather, and to his Benefactor's memory.'

Above the inscription there is a bas-relief carved in marble. It represents, in the foreground, the mortally wounded patriot falling from his horse; and, in the background, the church and village of Chalgrove. The Hampdens' armorial bearings are emblazoned on shields, suspended from the branches of a tree that over-spreads the scene.

It is surprising to find that this family of ancient lineage have never had a private vault for interments. However, such is the case. Apparently, the graves of the Hampden family are mostly beneath the pavement in various parts of the church; but evidently some are also in the churchyard, where 'the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.'

The register testifies that the patriot was buried—we may be sure with many tears—among his ancestors, in their parish church, June 25, 1643, the day that followed his death. The spot of his burial is not indicated. A search for his remains was organised, in July 1828, by the desire of Lord Nugent, his biographer. An account of the proceedings appeared in the newspapers of the day. The narratives stated that the investigators examined, without any satisfactory results, the initials and dates of several leaden coffins buried beneath the flooring of the church. But at length they came upon a coffin which, judging from its position, they presumed ended their task. It was considered probable that the patriot would desire to be interred near his beloved wife, and the coffin in question was lying nearly underneath the tablet that he erected to her memory, and whereupon he affectionately recorded her numerous virtues.

Notwithstanding that the coffin-plate was too

corroded and broken to allow of the inscription being deciphered, it was resolved that the lid should be cut open. It was hoped that the condition of the body would serve to throw light upon the contradictory statements regarding the manner in which the patriot was wounded, supposing that these were his remains. The gunshot wound, that ended in death after six days of intense suffering, is said to have happened in two very different ways. According to one account, John Hampden's hand was blown off by the bursting of his own pistol, which was over-charged. This weapon, it is narrated, had been given to the patriot by his son-in-law, Sir Robert Pye. Another account says that a brace of bullets shattered the patriot's shoulder. Entire evidence of the former, and partial evidence of the latter, catastrophe are averred to have been detected in the exhumed body. The hand of the right arm appeared to have been amputated, for the hand, or rather a number of small bones, was found enclosed in a separate cloth; also the left shoulder seemed displaced, though, the bones being quite perfect, there could have been no wound likely to prove fatal. The searchers concluded that this dislocation was either caused by the force of a bullet, or by the fall from his horse, after the exploded pistol had done its deadly work.

A general opinion prevailed that John Hampden's grave had been found. But the wish, we know, is often father to the thought. Anyway, it is significant that particulars of this disinterment are omitted in Lord Nugent's life of the patriot. We may therefore infer that the precise spot where Hampden sleeps his last sleep has not been indisputably discovered.

THE CAMERA-OBSCURA.

A STORY.

By J. S. FLETCHER.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

WHEN I first joined the Coastguard service, there was a great deal more romance about it than there is nowadays. A cargo of contraband stuff came in once a week then, where it does not come in once a year now. The smugglers, too, were fellows who were not afraid of giving and taking a few blows in the exercise of their trade. Many a brush have I had with them in which blood was spilt as freely as water, firearms and cutlasses being used on both sides without compunction. It was stiff work in those days; and the coastguard of to-day who walks along his mile or two of outlook and takes occasional sightings with his glass, has small conception of what wild jobs we sometimes had in the old days when a boatful of goods came in from Holland or France to be discharged in some lonely spot on the coast.

However upright and honest in other things they might be, I always found that the coast-people had not the slightest misgivings of conscience where smuggling was concerned. It seemed as natural to them to get their spirits and tobacco free of duty as it is to an ordinary man to buy them in the usual way. I have known men who

would not have defrauded their neighbours of a penny, and whose morality and honesty were beyond question, but who were beyond repentance in the matter of smuggling. The fact was they had been taught to smuggle from their very childhood, and could not see the harm of it. Again, as many of them urged, they bought the stuff over in foreign towns and paid for it—why, then, should they not be allowed to bring it to their own homes? It was useless to attempt any explanation of the law. Dwellers in solitary places know and care little about any laws but their own.

My first station was at Porthlock, a solitary fishing village on the east side of Lizard Point. The population was a typical Cornish one, and there was scarcely a soul that was not engaged in some sea-trade or in some calling connected with the staple industry. Perhaps the parson and the doctor were the only persons not actually concerned in one or other of the boats that put out of the little quay-pool, and I am not quite sure that the doctor was not as much interested in some of them as in his practice, which was not a good one, for the place was wonderfully healthy.

I had not been long at Porthlock, however, when I came to the conclusion that if fishing was the ostensible principal pursuit of the place, in reality it was nothing of the sort. True, the boats went out religiously, and there were great hauls brought to the quay-side; but something lay behind all that. The people of Porthlock, from the old mariner of a hundred years to the sturdy urchins of eight or ten, were inveterate and determined smugglers. I could make no distinction amongst them: the doctor was as bad as any of the others, and I always had an idea that the easy-going old parson was not beyond accepting an occasional gift of brandy and tobacco that had never paid duty.

It was impossible to feel angry with these people, for they performed their nefarious practices under my very nose, and smiled in my face as they did so, just like naughty children that laugh at you when they are committing some piece of perversity. They were always friendly with me, and if I had but said the word, would have found me in as much spirits and tobacco as would have supplied me for a twelvemonth. My predecessor had been somewhat lax in his duties, and I had a pretty strong suspicion that the Porthlock folk had bribed him to willing blindness whenever his eyes ought to have been extra sharp. They soon found, however, that I was not going to aid and abet them in defrauding Her Majesty's revenue. I had come there to do my duty, and meant to do it at whatever cost.

I said as much to the doctor, a red-bearded, broad-figured Scotchman, who had seen everything and been everywhere, and who was the most genial, easy-tempered man I ever knew. He never seemed to have anything to do, save when a wee Porthlockian came into the world, or some old inhabitant went out of it, fairly worn out and venerable in years. He was a mighty man at fishing and otter-hunting, and could tell the finest stories over his glass of grog and pipe of bird's-eye. Again, he was friends with everybody, treating the fishermen as brothers, and not unseldom going out with them to sea. He was also as brave as a

lion, and was always first to respond if the life-boat was summoned.

'Why, of course,' said he, 'there's smuggling going on in the place. The drap spirits ye're drinking, man, never paid duty, nor yet the baccy in yer pipe.'

'That's a nice thing to tell a preventive officer, doctor,' I answered.

'Hoot, toot, man: dinna fash yersel' on that score. What harm will the puir bodies do to the Queen by bringing a bit cargo o' stuff across the water?'

That was how they all looked at it. They could see no harm in smuggling. It was a proper adjunct to their other trade of fishing.

There was one family in the place, however, who unblushingly proclaimed the fact that they were smugglers and nothing else. True, they did not say so in plain language; but their actions were just as eloquent as any words could be. They possessed two fine boats, and went to sea; but they never brought any fish back to the quay-pool. Sometimes they stole out of the harbour at night, and were away for a day or two. When I next caught sight of them, they were pursuing their usual vocation of lounging about the quay-pool; but there was an air of satisfaction on their dark visages which could only be accounted for in one way—they had successfully run in a cargo of contraband goods.

The name of this family was Nanjulian, and there were nine males engaged in smuggling—the father, old Zebedee Nanjulian, and his eight sons. Tall, athletic, dark-visaged men they were, all well able to show more than ordinary strength at wrestling and fighting. One of their peculiarities was a devout love of Scripture names. The eldest son was called Aaron; the second, Matthew; the third, Titus; then came in order Timothy, Cleophas, Simon, Esau, and Pharaoh. The last named was the one whom I cared less about than any of his brothers. He was about twenty-five years of age, and had an expression of countenance which I did not like. Pharaoh Nanjulian, in fact, looked the sort of man to stick at nothing. I felt sure that in a fight he would kill an enemy without compunction, and I devoutly hoped that he and I might never get across each other in the course of events.

As matters turned out, this was precisely what we did do. Not more than two miles out of Porthlock, right on the edge of the cliff, there stands a gentleman's seat, the name of which I have forgotten. He was a scientific man, who had built himself an observatory, and was always taking observations and such things about the sky and sea. I have forgotten his name too. But I have not forgotten the pretty little lodge which stood at the entrance to his grounds, nor the old lodge-keeper's pretty daughter, Bertha Penruddock. Old Penruddock had been a coast-guard man himself long years before. He was very comfortably housed in the lodge, and his duties were light enough, for there were days and days together when the gates were never opened.

My lookout extended just as far as Penruddock's place, and many a cold winter night did I step inside the cheery little cottage to warm myself at the fire. Very soon I began to feel something more than a passing interest in Bertha.

She was a pretty girl and a good girl, and would make any man a true wife. When I had come to that conclusion, I used to go to the lodge oftener than ever.

But Bertha had another suitor in the field—dark-faced Pharaoh Nanjulian. He was a strange suitor, too, never striving particularly to have speech of the girl, but always hanging about the lodge, as though he fancied that she would fall in his way sooner or later. Now and then, old Penruddock had asked him what he meant by loafing around there, and received a surly answer that the cliff was free to anybody, which was true enough. Once or twice Bertha, coming home from Porthlock, was met by Pharaoh and forced to speak to him. As he always behaved himself, and was certainly no stranger to the Penruddocks, the girl could hardly tell him that she wanted none of his company. He never made any advances to her, his sole method of making love being to stare at her pretty face and utter occasional remarks about the weather.

Master Pharaoh, however, was not minded to have a rival. He had set his heart upon marrying pretty Bertha. When he found that I was visiting the lodge-keeper rather oftener than mere friendliness called for, he waylaid me, and told me his mind straight out like a man. He was coming along the cliffs when I met him, and planted himself in my path—a tall, dark-faced young giant.

'Aw—ax your pardon; but you're a-trespassin' like on my presarves, Master Walsh.'

'Trespassing on your presarves. What do you mean?'

'Aw—ax your pardon if I be wrong; but heard you was going a main deal to Penruddock's cottage. Make so bold as to tell ye what I hear.'

'You've heard right,' I said. 'But what then? How I am trespassing on your presarves because I go to Penruddock's, I don't see.'

'Aw—well, I do mean to marry Bertha Penruddock myself, iss, sure I do; and won't have no man a-courtin' of her.'

'The young lady will please herself, I suppose,' I answered, feeling rather out of temper at this summary method of warning me off. 'I shan't stop away from Penruddock's because you tell me to do so.'

'Aw—then 'twill be unpleasant for ye, Master Walsh. Ax your pardon for tellin' ye; but 'tis tarrible fuleish work to go again me.'

I said no more, but went forward and left him. That night I went to Penruddock's cottage again and told them what Pharaoh had said. Somehow or other, Bertha and I came to an understanding on that occasion, and I went home-ward with ample assurance that however much Pharaoh might object, she would in due time become Mrs Edward Walsh.

Winter came on, and I soon formed a decided opinion that the Nanjulians were engaged in very extensive smuggling. From various bits of evidence that came to hand, we had no doubt whatever that valuable cargoes were being landed close to Porthlock, and so cleverly that we could not trace them. I nearly wore myself to death in keeping a lookout, and yet I came across no clue. It was a trying time, for I was on my merits, and a clever capture would have earned

for me the promotion I wanted. I grew anxious and careworn, and my peace of mind was not increased by the fact that the Nanjulians passed me with a sort of laugh-in-the-sleeve expression on their brown faces.

I came to the conclusion at last that somewhere along the neighbouring coast there was a cleverly concealed hiding-place where the smugglers were storing their goods. I would have given a year's wages to have found it. I hunted the rocks along the coast, and examined the rough ground on the headlands above, and could find nothing. Once, when I had been out all day engaged in this manner, I met several of the Nanjulians on my return, and heard them laughing in a sneering way after they had passed me. No doubt they had watched my proceedings, and were delighted to think that I was completely outwitted. But I felt sure that sooner or later the tables would be turned on old Zebedee Nanjulian and his eight sons.

One fine winter morning I found myself on the cliffs near Penruddock's cottage, and turned in there for a five minutes' chat with Bertha. The old man was out, and Bertha stood at the door with a pail of hot water and a scrubbing-brush in her hand. She had just locked the door and put the key in her pocket.

'Whither away, my girl?' I said.

'I'm going up to the Squire's latest invention, Ned,' she answered. 'He's built a thing on the Point yonder that enables you to see over the country all round. A camera-something they call it.'

'A camera-obscura,' I said. 'Ay? I should like to see that, Bertha. Is any one about?'

'The Squire's gone away for a day or two,' she answered. 'Come along, Ned. I know how to work it. You pull two or three strings, and walk round a white table—that's all. I'm going up there to scrub the floor.'

The Point, where the little wooden house for the camera-obscura had been built, was a high bit of wooded ground on the edge of a little promontory that ran out seawards, and fell sharply away to the sands. There was a good view of land and sea from it, and no better spot could have been found for the Squire's purpose. That morning was exceedingly bright and fine, and the view we had of the surrounding country was very clear. I soon learned how to manipulate the cords, and we spent a very pleasant half-hour watching the familiar objects appear on the white table. There was the town of Porthlock with its quay-pool and old-fashioned gables; then the beach and sea; then another stretch of beach and rocks; then more headland and coast; and again the lonely meadows until we came round to Porthlock once more. It was most amusing to have far-away objects brought so near home. Just as we had completed the circle, we heard old Penruddock calling Bertha's name in the grounds outside.

'He wants the key,' said Bertha; and opened the door and ran away towards the cottage. I shut the door again, and pulled the cords so that the beach beyond Porthlock was photographed on the table. It had struck me that a camera-obscura would save me many miles of walking in fine weather, for it brought all the country close to your very eyes. I pulled the reflector

round, not having any particular object in view, until a bit of coast about a mile away lay represented on the table. The scenery just there was very wild and rugged. It was known locally as the Six Sisters, because there were six obelisk-like rocks there which rose straight out of the water and the sand, four of them being below, and two a good deal above high-water mark. These rocks, with their sharp points, were very accurately represented by the camera-obscura; and I was admiring the cleverness of the invention, when I suddenly saw something which brought an exclamation of wonder to my lips.

Down the face of the cliff came five men. I recognised them at once as five of the Nanjulians. No other men in Porthlock had such tall figures or long limbs. Which five I could not say, for I could not distinguish their faces, but five Nanjulians they were. When I saw that, I slipped a catch in the door, so that no one could open it and let in the light. Then I followed the movements of the far-away group with eager eyes. It was like watching ghosts moving in a land of shadows. The five moved about aimlessly for a while, but I noticed that each wandered in a different direction. Presently they drew near each other again, and were joined by a sixth Nanjulian, who came down from the headland. Then they all went to the base of the sixth rock—the one that stood highest out of high-water mark. I could not make out what they were doing, but presently I saw them one by one disappear into the sand, as if they had been swallowed up. The sixth remained, and was busied about the base of the rock for a little while, after which he walked away along the sands in the direction of Porthlock.

I went out with a feeling of triumph. I had found the key to my puzzle: I had, by a strange chance, discovered the store-place of the Nanjulians' contraband goods. At the base of that rock there was a trap-door, covered by the sand, and affording entrance to one of those subterranean caverns where goods or men can be concealed with perfect safety. The man who remained above had done so in order to spread the sand over the trap-door again: those who had gone below were doubtless engaged in packing or arranging the fruits of their last smuggling expedition. Such was the theory I formed. I had no doubt of its being correct; it seemed to me that the time was ripe for making a splendid capture.

LINGERING AUTUMN.

THE morning mists begin to gather in the moist low-lying meadows, and linger amongst the hills and woods far into the day. The richness of colour in the forest trees, the yellowing patches in the hedgerows, and the russet-brown and gold of the ferns and bracken, show unmistakable signs that the late beauty of Autumn is with us. The amber light of the sun no longer shines on the harvest fields, for the ripened grain has been long gathered and garnered, save here and there a late crop of beans or aftermath. The drooping poppies have lost their brilliancy of colour; yarrow and hawkweeds have taken the place of scabious and toad-flax, oxeye daisies and harebells; but

the hardy pink-and-white convolvulus is still in blossom amongst the matted weeds and stubble, though the flowers are more delicate in colour; and the fragile leaflets and pinkish purple bush-vetch adds to the fading beauty of autumn.

Along the banks are bunches of white campion, their pure flowers standing fair and tall from the wild tangle of grasses and wild-ouats; and growing in close proximity in the moister ditches is its sister-flower, the red campion. Sometimes that erratic wanderer, the spikenard, is found in the hedges at this season; and on the waste lands and wayside are seen marsh-mallow and yellow lady's-slipper. On sunny afternoons the humble-bees are still busy on the wild thyme and gorse bushes. Tall plants of thistles and burdock add their handsome clusters of foliage and purple heads to the scene.

The fullness of autumn is shown in the trees and hedgerows, that abound with hips and haws, sloes, blackberries, and other wild-fruit; and if there be any truth in old saws, it foretells a sharp winter; but with wild-fruits as well as cultivated sorts the cropping is more often determined by the state of the weather during the time of blossoming and setting.

There are stores of nuts and acorns, there are wild plums in abundance; and on the boughs of the old crab-trees, besides the fruit, are dainty gray-green lichens, and brownish green mosses on the gnarled old stumps. The woody night-shade climbs and clings and straggles about the hedges; and even at this late season, some lilac blossoms are on the long trails, with the bunches of berries varying in tint from green to pale yellow, orange, red, and finally deepest crimson. Not far off is its near relative, the common night-shade, whose berries are jet black.

The bearberry was once thought poisonous in England, but is now better known, and much appreciated, making an excellent conserve. It is so used in Spain and Ireland. It was first brought to this country by the monks of Mucross Abbey. The dells and hollows under the young trees in the coppices are beginning to fill with a rich carpet of fallen leaves, though they have fallen so quietly, so gradually, we have hardly been conscious of their decay. The closing year has been a most exceptionally fine one throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles: the first months were comparatively mild, and free from sharp frost; then came the calm bright sunny spring, followed by the brilliant hot summer; and the warm welcome rains of July caused a fresh up-springing of herbage; and now the late autumn is sinking into the arms of winter with a quiet loveliness almost unprecedented. The broad harvest moon has waxed and waned in crimson splendour, succeeded by the lingering twilight and soft cool darkness of early autumn, and the wind sighs fitfully through the leaves with a gentle mournfulness.

Autumn departs, but still his mantle's fold
Rests on the groves of noble Somerville,
Beneath a shroud of russet dropped with gold;
Tweed and its tributaries mingle still;
Hoarser the wind, and deeper swells the rill;
Yet lingering notes of sylvan music swell
The deep-toned cushat and the redbreast shrill;
And yet, some tints of summer's splendour tell
When the broad sun smiles down on Ettrick's
western fell.

As October draws in, the clearer sharpness of the air, the sharply defined clouds, and the rapid shortening of the days, usually show the advance of the season; but the days are often very pleasant, and as a rule there are quite twenty fine days in this month. The few remaining members of the swallow tribe take their departure to sunnier climes, though, occasionally, stray late broods may be seen hovering over the sheltered banks of rivers and streams till the middle of November. The redwings now begin to come in flocks, and pick over the root-crops and pasture-lands in search of grubs and insects, till stress of weather sends them to happier hunting-grounds. Larks and other birds which stay the winter with us also congregate in flocks on the approach of frosty nights; and the touch of winter begins to be perceptibly felt morning and evening. The lingering late leaves will soon be down, and the noble trees, but lately standing clothed in grand masses of colour, will be stripped bare of foliage; and the sighing winds exchanged for louder, rougher tones, that eddy round the hills and woods in wild rushing blasts. The whirl and rustle of birds, the crack of the gun, the scuttle and rush of dogs, and the cheery 'View halloo!' of the huntsman, all tell how swiftly the eventful year is speeding to its close. Silently it has slipped away in all its glowing splendour, its soft promise of spring, the rich fulfilment of summer, and ripeness of autumn; and soon the 'old year will lie a-dying' under the glittering eternal stars, with all its loves and hopes, its joys, ambitions, and lost opportunities, to vanish in turn in the abyss of time.

SEA-VOICES.

WHERE the broad sands lay smooth for fairy feet,
And shells of pearl shone in the dim moonlight,
The fisher-lads were courting while the bleat
Of moving flocks came through the peaceful night—
And ever like a plea
Rose the insistent murmur of the sea.

And when the fishers sailed to snare the fins
That ripple all the surface of the deep,
They went a-smiling, for 'he laughs who wins'—
Although the peewits neared in boding sweep,
And to a minor key
Was changed the boding music of the sea.

But when the storm-winds tore the gathering clouds,
And loosed their fury on the watery world,
So that the dead must gibber in their shrouds,
And into space th' unready quick be hurled—
Then ominous and free
Woke the remorseless thunder of the sea.

But when the oil of heaven had calmed the waves,
And noon was ripening over hill and lea—
Over the mourners and the ocean-graves,
Hark to the bitter sobbing of the sea!
For sorrow that must be,
The bitter, bitter grieving of the sea.

C. AMY DAWSON.

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A SECRET OF THE SOLOMON ISLANDS.

By J. F. HOGAN, M.P.

A CABLE message from Brisbane published towards the end of July this year announced the proclamation of a British protectorate over the Pacific group known as the Solomon Islands. Thereby hangs a tale, and not the least singular of the many romances of real life that are associated with the early history of Australia. It is the story of one of the most colossal speculators of the nineteenth century, and of his unwitnessed, but, there is every reason to conclude, horrible fate. His name was Benjamin Boyd, and he was born about 1796, the son of Edward Boyd, of Merton Hall, Wigtown, a member of an old Scottish family. He claimed to be a direct descendant of a brother of the Thomas Boyd who was the ancestor of the Earls of Kilmarnock. For some years he carried on business in London as a stockbroker; and in the year 1840, being then in his forty-fourth year, Ben Boyd—to give him his familiar colonial designation—arrived at the antipodes in the capacity of managing director of a new financial institution called the Royal Banking Company of Australia, but which was in reality a syndicate of Scotch and English speculators, who had convinced themselves that huge fortunes for each and all were to be made in a few years by large and judicious investments in Australian land. As a matter of subsequent history, they were perfectly right in their calculations; but the proverbial slip between the cup and the lip came in the collapse of their trusted colonial agent (Mr Boyd) when they were all on the eve of becoming millionaires. Had they been able to hold on to their investments until the gold discoveries had sent up the value of Australian land a hundred, and even a thousand fold, they would have rejoiced in the title of lucky speculators; but the fickle goddess decided against them. They not only lost most of their original capital, but they had the added mortification of seeing others reaping the golden harvests that they had sown.

But I am anticipating the course of events. From the nature and constitution of the Royal Banking Company of Australia—a syndicate of British speculators with no practical knowledge of the colonies, and only anxious to acquire wealth without working for it—it is obvious that Mr Boyd, the managing director, and the man on the spot, could do what he pleased with the subscribed capital of the organisation. There was practically no check whatever upon his operations. Finding himself virtually uncontrolled, and with large financial resources to draw upon, he lost no time in either purchasing or leasing from the State immense areas of land in New South Wales and the districts that have since become the separate colonies of Victoria and Queensland. These he stocked with sheep and cattle; and he thus rapidly blossomed into one of the most enterprising of pioneer 'squatters.' As a further outlet for his superfluous energies, he organised a fleet of whalers, with which he pursued and captured the leviathans of the deep, that were then pretty numerous in the Australian seas, but have since been mostly scared away in the direction of the South Pole.

As a headquarters for his whaling industry, as well as a port of accommodation for his numerous squatting stations in the south of New South Wales, he resolved to build a town on the southern shore of Twofold Bay. In the establishment of this town, which he named after himself, he sank thousands of pounds; and it proved the most disastrous of all his speculations. It involved him in a long and ruinous conflict with the New South Wales Government, who were sensible of the great future importance of Twofold Bay as the one safe and commodious harbour between Sydney and Melbourne. They accordingly proclaimed a Government town on the northern side of the bay, and christened it Eden, which paradisiacal title it bears to this day. The fight for supremacy between these two towns was fierce and vigorous in the extreme. Eden of course was pushed ahead by all the motive-power of Government patronage and State

expenditure; while Boydtown was built up into prominence and seeming prosperity by the capital of the confiding shareholders of the Royal Banking Company. It was probably to keep these latter in good humour that a most attractive and reassuring picture of Boydtown found its way into an early number of the 'Illustrated London News.' Amongst his other varied accomplishments Mr Boyd must have thoroughly mastered the art and practice of 'booming,' for in a voluminous 'Gazetteer of New South Wales' brought out in 1848 in London and Sydney by the Government Surveyor of the colony, there are actually more than twenty pages devoted to a most eulogistic description of Boydtown; while the rival Government town of Eden is dismissed in a dozen lines. He must have been a smart man who accomplished that feat. There are besides in the Gazetteer two steel engravings illustrative of Boydtown in the heyday of its brief prosperity, one showing a number of whales being harpooned in the harbour, and the other exhibiting Boydtown as apparently the most solid, substantial, and progressive of budding cities.

Alas for the gorgeous dreams of its enterprising founder! Boydtown has been defunct for close on forty years, although I am aware that it still retains a ghostly existence on most maps of Australia issued in Great Britain. Geographers, or, to be more specific, map-producers are one of the most conservative races under the sun. Once a town gets upon a map, it has got to stay there apparently, and the fact that it has vanished off the face of the earth is a matter of no consequence. It so happens that I have wandered amongst the ruins of Boydtown, and I can certify in the presence of Messrs Stanford, Keith-Johnston, Bartholomew, and all the other geographers, that they have been unconsciously for many years perpetuating a little fib. Boydtown is now, and has long been, a deserted and almost lifeless collection of magnificent ruins—all that is left to represent many thousands of good British money.

Boydtown is associated with my first experience as a special correspondent. It was soon after I joined the 'Melbourne Argus' that a large steamer called the 'Balclutha' disappeared in a furious gale between Melbourne and Sydney. Government steamers promptly started from each of these capitals—the 'Despatch' from the former, and the 'Captain Cook' from the latter. I was on board the 'Despatch' as the representative of the 'Argus.' We searched all along the coast until we arrived off Twofold Bay, where we fell in with the 'Captain Cook.' Neither had discovered a solitary trace of the missing steamer, nor was any evidence of her fate ever afterwards elicited. Both the 'Despatch' and the 'Captain Cook' steamed up Twofold Bay to Eden, where we all went ashore and telegraphed reports to our principals. We remained off Eden for a day to await further instructions. I availed myself of this opportunity to go round the head of the bay to the ruins of Boydtown, and see all that was to be seen of the vanished glories of the most daring and colossal of colonial speculators. I surveyed the silent walls of the towering, magnificent, but now empty abode that Mr Boyd had built and destined for

himself, where he would reign as *de facto* Governor of all the southern district, and from which he could exercise sway and influence over a country larger than France. I strolled over the monster hotel he had erected for the accommodation of the host of visitors and intending settlers that he fondly anticipated would arrive in regular batches when the name and fame of Boydtown, and the province of which it was the predicted capital, became known all over the English-speaking world. I wandered alone through the grass-grown streets by roofless cottages and past gigantic warehouses and factories that, even in their decay and abandonment, told of the phenomenal, if fleeting, prosperity of the place, and compelled a silent tribute of admiration for the luckless adventurer who could conceive and execute such titanic and far-reaching schemes. I walked along the rotting wharfs and jetties, once all life and activity with the loading and discharging of ships, now without a solitary vessel moored to their worm-eaten sides. I climbed up the headland, on the highest point of which there stood the towering white-stone lighthouse that never was a lighthouse, for, after erecting it at an immense cost, Mr Boyd found that the Government had power to prevent him from ever exhibiting a light from its summit. And I came away from all these melancholy survivals of one man's mad ambition, unbridled speculation, and evanescent glory, with the philosophical reflection that, even in a young country like Australia there is abundant material for moralising on the vanity of human wishes.

'But what has all this got to do with the Solomon Islands?' I fancy I hear the reader exclaiming. Well, I am going to establish the connection now. It was necessary to give some account of the comet-like career of this extraordinary character, in order to understand and to appreciate the appalling fate that was so soon to overtake him at the hands of the Solomon Islanders. As time went on, and as the promised dividends failed repeatedly to be forthcoming, the British shareholders naturally became dissatisfied, and at last burst forth into loud murmurs against their local managing director. They demanded some more substantial return for their money than pretty pictures of Boydtown in the 'Illustrated London News,' glowing accounts of the hundreds of thousands of acres they owned, covered with multitudinous flocks and herds, and the fleets of whale-ships they possessed all over the southern seas. Boyd, besides, had 381,000 acres of land, which were his own property. Had the shareholders been patient a little longer, they would really have become, in the language of the Adelphi hero, 'rich beyond the dreams of avarice;' but by insisting on a change of management, they deprived themselves of all the enormous added value to their properties that the opening-up of the Australian gold-fields conferred, and virtually wrecked the gigantic and far-reaching enterprises that Boyd had built up with their and his money. The upshot of the negotiations was that Boyd agreed to retire and resign all claims on the syndicate in consideration of his receiving three of the whale-ships, his yacht the 'Wanderer,' and two sections of land around Boydtown. On his retirement, the vast Australian properties he had acquired soon fell into the

English Court of Chancery, and were disposed of in London at prices that represented only a fractional part of their value twelve months afterwards. The shareholders had to make good a deficit of £30,000.

Having been thus compulsorily relieved of all cares and responsibilities in connection with the Royal Banking Company of Australia, this mercurial and most sanguine of speculators light-heartedly went on board the 'Wanderer,' and careered across the Pacific on a visit to the newly-discovered gold-fields of California. According to the popular novelist, Rolf Boldrewood, who was acquainted with Boyd and the 'Wanderer,' the latter belonged to the Royal Yacht Squadron, and was a handsome topsail schooner of two hundred and forty tons register, fitted up with great elegance, and well armed. 'She might have passed for the model of one of Tom Cringle's fascinating privateers.' It was on June 3, 1851, that the 'Wanderer' steamed through the Golden Gate of San Francisco on the return voyage to Australia. On October 14 she found herself becalmed off Guadalcanar, one of the Solomon Islands. A book that is now exceedingly rare, 'The Last Cruise of the Wanderer,' thus pictures the scene: 'How can I describe the beauty of the scene now presented to us? The lofty hills crowned with forest cast a deep shadow across the little bay. Canoes were skimming and glancing through the calm water. The wild natives shouted, whether in welcome or otherwise, we could not say. Mr Boyd never appeared in better spirits, walking up and down the deck exclaiming: "Is not this delightful?" Intending to have a day's shooting on the morrow, we had our guns cleaned in readiness for the morning's sport.' Then, under date October 15, the diarist of the cruise continues: 'Having been on watch during the night, I did not rise as early as I intended. On reaching deck I perceived that Mr Boyd had anticipated me, and was half-way between the schooner and the shore. I hailed him. He said he should be on board to breakfast, and bring off some game for dinner. These were the last recorded words ever uttered by him. He was accompanied by Kapartania, a native of Panapa, who sculled the boat. We saw them enter the creek and disappear round a bend of the stream. We heard two shots at intervals of a quarter of an hour, of which at the time we took no notice.' But suddenly a number of canoes filled with evidently hostile savages put off from the shore towards the yacht. What followed is thus described:

'Suddenly a cry arose from the water—a cry, which, once heard, could never be forgotten. It was as if a host of demons had suddenly been let loose. The air resounded with their yells and the sullen roaring of war-conches. A shower of spears and arrows with other missiles came hurtling among us. Sheltering ourselves behind the bulwark till the first storm passed, we fired into the canoes with deadly effect. Many were shot down before they were driven from the after-part of the vessel's side. On they came again, and were rapidly driving our crew aft, their boarding-pikes being opposed by the wicker-work shields with which the natives defended themselves. However, these proved of no avail against the white man's fire. Our crew made a charge and cleared the decks, despatching the

wounded and throwing them overboard. Then we brought a two-pounder swivel gun, loaded with grape, to bear upon the canoes. This decided the battle. Thoughts of poor Boyd crossed my mind often during the conflict. None of us now doubted but that he had been cruelly murdered, the last report of his gun probably preceding his death. The poor lad with him could offer no resistance, as he was unarmed. The defeated savages retreated about a hundred yards, huddled together in the greatest confusion. We ran out our deck guns and opened upon them with grape. We could hear the iron hail crashing through the canoes, when all made instant retreat for the shore. The majority of the canoes, in consequence of our continued fire, were left on the beach, the natives escaping to the woods, carrying their dead and wounded. One native was seen running along the beach with Mr Boyd's hat on.'

For several days in succession the officers and crew of the 'Wanderer' searched all over the island for traces of their unfortunate chief, but all in vain. They discovered nothing but the sword-belt which he had on when he left the vessel on the fatal morning. They found it amidst ominous surroundings—in a stranded canoe filled with water and blood. More than forty years have passed, and during all that time not the slightest scrap of evidence has been forthcoming as to the manner in which this bold, adventurous, and remarkable celebrity vanished beyond mortal ken. But as the Solomon Islanders were then, and to no small extent still are, amongst the most notorious cannibals of the Pacific, it is to be feared that the official placing of the group under the protection of Her Majesty will not appreciably contribute to the solution of the mystery.

By a sad and striking coincidence, the day on which Ben Boyd vanished into the unknown was actually the day preceding the first authoritative publication of the news of the gold discovery in Australia, a discovery that was destined to add immensely to the value of the vast areas he had acquired when he was the Napoleonic managing director of the Royal Banking Company. 'What an ironic stroke of fate,' exclaims Rolf Boldrewood, 'that the doomed "Wanderer" should be on her way to Australia in the month of the year 1851 when her owner would have heard of the wondrous gold discovery by which his vast properties, with his increasing flocks and herds, were quintupled, yea, advanced tenfold in value—that, while on his way to the golden land to hear of marvels worthy to be ranked with the tales of Scheherazade, with Sindbad and the valley of diamonds, he should have gone ashore at a fateful isle in the South Seas to shoot a few pigeons and return for breakfast, and—never to be seen again.'

There is a portrait of Boyd in the British Museum, taken in Sydney in 1848, when he was at the zenith of his Australian pride, power, and magnificence as the largest 'squatter' or pastoral prince in the southern hemisphere. Beyond a general suggestion of shrewdness and solidity, there is nothing strikingly Scotch in the face, which on the whole conveys an impression of kindness, thoughtfulness, and benevolence. The eyes are somewhat keen and penetrating—an

index, no doubt, to the character of the cool, far-seeing speculator. The forehead is high and massive, and the head is crowned with masses of curly hair. Altogether, the features are decidedly pleasing, and even prepossessing.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER VIII.

And yet he glanced not up, nor waved his hand,
Nor bad farewell, but sadly rode away.
This was the one discourtesy that he used.

TENNYSON.

IT was very wet the following morning; the rain came down in torrents, swelling the brook that ran down the side of Scar Street, till it became quite an important-looking stream, and whirled away the cabbage stalks and lobster shells, as if it would not stand any nonsense or stick at trifles.

Nigel had a sore heel, contracted during some of his breakneck climbs on the Landslip; but this did not signify, as jam-making was the order of the day, and for that occupation you can shuffle about comfortably in one of Mrs Rockett's old slippers, and can cross the road when necessary on Dennis's back.

Sage did not mind the rain either; she would have been equally serenely happy if the sun had shone, which would have meant a long morning on the cliff or shore or in a boat on the shining blue sea, always in that company that made sunshine quite independent of the capricious luminary overhead. But as it rained, it would be almost more delightful to spend the time in the studio with the painter working at his canvas, so absorbed sometimes in his work that he was unconscious of the presence of others, who in their turn became unconscious of him, and wandered away into that solitude à deux which is so blissful.

'What are you smiling at?' Kitty asked suddenly, looking up from weighing the blackberries with much-stained fingers.

And Sage flushed up all over her face and delicate neck, for she was smiling at the anticipation of the brisk step that was sure to sound in a few minutes down the street, and the figure that would fill the low doorway, obstructing the light that found its way mainly into the room by the door; and the cheerful, pleasant voice that would convey a peremptory message from the painter to come and cheer his loneliness, as he was bored to death with Maurice's company.

Sage had helped Mrs Rockett to wash up the breakfast things, after which that lady had gone stumping across to the 'Black Dog,' with her skirts tucked up abnormally high, and children and blackberries following close at her heels; so Sage was left alone in the little kitchen with the big eight-day clock in the corner tick-tocking away, an hour and a half slow, and the drip-drip of the rain from the eaves.

Sage got out a little sketch and began touching

it up, not improving it very much, I fancy, for it was only done from the wish to appear occupied when that step should come down the street, so that she might not seem to be listening and expecting with every fibre of her body.

'I say, Sage,' cried Nigel, entering, 'haven't you any more jars or anything we can put the jam in? I wonder if Mrs Stock has a few jars she could lend us? She's awfully good-natured. It's not raining half as bad as it was' (just then a swirl of wind and rain blew in at the door and rattled the casement); 'don't you think you could just go up to the farm and ask? I'd go in a minute, if it wasn't for this jolly old foot; and I don't want Dennis and Will to meddle with my pots; they're a lot better than theirs.'

Sage got up with more alacrity than you would have expected from her listless attitude a minute before. Here was a plausible excuse for going up to the farm, an excuse she had been trying vainly to find for the last hour. A fortnight ago, no excuse would have been needed; but now Nigel's jam pots were hailed as an excellent reason for leaving the picturesque, little kitchen, where the silence had become almost intolerable, and for sallying forth into the stormy, gusty weather, to climb the windy, exposed path to the farm, and find out what had happened to alter the usual course of events in such an unaccountable way.

She reached the farm, all blown about, breathless, and dishevelled. Mrs Stock was shaking a duster at the door, and received her with loud exclamations at her venturing out on such a rough day.

'Come right away into the kitchen; and take off your cloak, and let me see if your petticoats is wet. Why ever didn't one of the chaps step up for the jars?—Bless you, I've a-plenty. I'll send Bill down with a basketful on 'em.—And don't they want some apples to put along with the blackberries? It makes it a deal nicer, to my thinking, though I don't care much for it anyhow, with all them seeds getting into your teeth and teasing the very life out of you.—There; I'll just go up to the apple-room and look out a few, as I don't think Mrs Rockett had a-many on them trees of hers, and not good cookers, if she have.'

From the open kitchen door the studio door was plainly to be seen, and Sage felt sure that door would open directly Mrs Stock's very audible voice was heard; but this did not happen; and a little return of the chill of disappointment crept into her heart as she stood by the kitchen fire, while Mrs Stock went off to the apple-room with her mind about her jam-pots and fruit.

The smell of tobacco smoke was reassuring, and with a sudden impulse she plucked up her courage and went across and knocked at the studio door.

'Come in,' sounded the painter's voice; and, with a very fluttering heart, she opened the door and went in.

Owen Ludlow was painting, with his back turned to the door, and an appearance of great application and absorption. There was no one else in the room.

'Is that you, Sage? Come in, my dear. What a miserable wet day for you to come out, child!

I am improving the shining hour—not very shining is it, though?—and am trying to finish off that little bit on the beach with old Lot in his boat.—Come and see what you think of it.”

Sage crossed the room, and stood behind the painter's chair with her eyes fixed on his canvas; but I do not think she could have told what was the subject there portrayed, for, mentally, she was examining the room, which with her bodily eyes she had taken in at a glance, for reassuring signs that Maurice's absence was only temporary, and that in another moment he might be there. It struck her with a little chill that the room looked neater than it had done of late; for Maurice was one of those men who make their presence evident by a newspaper left here, a pipe there, a glove dropped on the ground, and the chairs pushed about anyhow. To be sure, an open book lay face downwards on one of the chairs, and on this her mind fixed while she stood behind the painter, who talked away more volubly than was his wont about his work, a volubility that had a touch of feverishness about it, if Sage had been alive to peculiarities of manner just then.

But at last he stopped rather abruptly, perhaps aware of how little attention his silent auditor was paying to his somewhat pedantic harangue on tone and colour; and he bent more closely to his work on the toe of Lot's boot, as if his life depended on depicting the ravages of time and sea-water on that article; and he said in an artificially careless manner: “Moore had to be off sooner than he intended. He went up by the 6.30 this morning. He asked me to say good-bye for him.”

There was a murmur in response that might have meant surprise or regret or interest; and the painter went on with a few remarks on the train-service from Shingle and the advantage of being able to catch the express at the junction; and she answered “Yes” and “No,” not always quite appropriately; and presently she turned away with a little shiver and sat down in the arm-chair where the open book lay.

A fire had been lighted in the studio, as it was damp and chilly; and the painter, who felt that little shiver, and knew that it was mental chill which induced it, pretended to attribute it to her windy, wet walk, and pushed the chair close up in front of the fire, which he stirred to a cheery blaze, and bade her sit there and roast, as he had often nipped a cold in the bud by getting very hot.

He scrupulously avoided looking at her face as he did so; and during the silent hour that ensued, he only now and then stole a glance at the girlish figure, and the little, white face with the great eyes fixed on the blaze. Surely, it was a good thing there were no more sittings needed for the picture, or else that look might have crept into the picture unawares, as the look of recognition and the look of love had come—this new look, that was so pathetically like a broken heart.

They had often had such silent times before; when Ludlow was much absorbed in his work or his thoughts, he would not scruple to be silent, and leave Sage to her own devices; and so now the girl, with that instinct common to man and brutes to hide their hurts, comforted herself with the feeling that there was nothing

remarkable in the silence, and that it was an infinite relief that Mr Ludlow was so engrossed by his picture, though she could not quite remember which it was.

And so she spent all that September afternoon in profound quiet in the soft, rainy dullness, turning the leaves of the book that had lain open on the chair, hardly noticing what book it was, only feeling that it had been left there by the hand that had held hers the night before, and that most likely would never hold hers again.

If she had noticed where it lay open, it might have given her a clue to the reason of Maurice Moore's sudden departure; but I hardly think it would have occurred to her to connect herself in any way with “the lily maid of Astolat,” however ready she might have been to compare Maurice Moore with Sir Lancelot.

It was Tennyson's “Idylls of the King,” and, on the story of Lancelot and Elaine, Owen Ludlow had founded his lecture to Maurice the night before.

As has been said, Maurice came in from that lingering moonlight walk with Sage with an unaccountably apologetic feeling in his mind; and one glance at the painter's face told him he was in for it; and he sat down in the chair opposite his old friend with a look of comical concern that was not entirely a joke, and said: “Go it, old chap; but draw it mild, and let me light my pipe first.”

But he was not prepared for the way Ludlow began, and the somewhat forced merriment died away from his face.

“I've told you about my wife; haven't I, Moore?”

Maurice nodded.

“But I don't think I ever told you of her baby, a little girl who, if she—had been with me now would have been just the age of this little Sage Merridew, and I sometimes think might have been not unlike her.”

“Ah!” Maurice said sympathetically between the puffs of his pipe.

“It is partly this that has made me take such an interest in the little girl, and— Maurice, old man, I think I feel as much about her happiness and peace of mind as I should about my own daughter's.”

“You don't suppose?”—

“No; I don't; but I am pretty sure that what's play to you is deadly earnest to that poor child.”

“Do you think I have no gentlemanly feeling?”

“I know you have, and that is why I am speaking to you to-night, for you have quite a right to say it is no concern of mine, and that I'm a meddling old fool.”

“Ludlow! you of all people!”

“Yes; all right. I know you think I have a right to interfere in your concerns, because I gave you a pill and draught years ago. I don't think I have any right on that score; but never mind; if you think so, I'll avail myself of it, and say: “Mind what you're about with this little girl, as you don't mean to marry her.””

Maurice laughed; but it was an awkward, uncomfortable laugh.

“Upon my word, Ludlow, this is the first time I have ever had my intentions asked. Nobody

cares what the intentions of an unlucky beggar like me may be. I'm what they call a detrimental; it's only elder sons and millionaires who are supposed or permitted to have matrimonial intentions.'

'That's just it. Your marrying Sage Merridew is out of the question.'

'Quite. Every one must know it.'

'No; she would not. Your income—what is it? two or three hundred a year—would sound like wealth to Dr Merridew's daughter, who could live pretty comfortably on what you spend in gloves and button-holes.—Oh no! I know well enough it's not wealth by any means. I know, quite as well as you do, that it would be sheer madness for you with your expensive tastes to marry on that, even—if you wished it.'

Maurice was silent, pulling at his moustache rather savagely, and letting his pipe go out. It was quite true; but it was not pleasant to hear Ludlow say it.

'It would not matter a bit with one of your society girls; they are made of sterner stuff than little Sage, and can give and take and be none the worse; but with Sage it's different—it's all give, and no take; and that's a terribly losing business.'

'Well,' Maurice said impatiently, getting up and walking up and down the room, 'anyhow, there's only one more day of it, and then I shall be off, and she will forget all about me.'

'If she can.'

Then there was silence for a bit, with Maurice pacing the room, and Ludlow lying back in his chair, puffing at his pipe; but at last he said—and Maurice thought at first that he was abruptly changing the subject and perhaps wishing to have done with it: 'Maurice, do you remember the story of Elaine, that poem of Tennyson's?—Yes; I expect you do, for I used to spout it to you often enough at the ranch. I was mad about it then, and knew every line.—Well, don't you remember the father's appeal to Lancelot, when he was leaving?

Too courteous are ye, fair Sir Lancelot.
I pray you use some rough discourtesy
To blunt or break her passion.

It has been running in my head while you have been wearing out Mrs Stock's carpet with your perambulations.'

Then further silence and more paces, and at last Maurice said: 'Ludlow, old fellow, I think I'll go up by the early train to-morrow. There's a fellow I want to see in London.' He said it in a hurried, shamefaced way, avoiding the painter's eye, and being very busy cleaning out the stem of his pipe with a straw. 'I'll just step over to Shingle; and you can send my traps after me later in the day. All the same, I think it's a great piece of nonsense. Girls' hearts are not so brittle as you seem to imagine. Little Miss Sage will forget all about your humble servant in a few days; and some smart, young medico will turn up far more to her taste.—Well,' he added, with a very evidently simulated yawn and stretch, 'I think I'll turn in, as I shall have to be such an early bird to-morrow to catch the train, instead of the worm. Good-night and good-bye, old man.—And I say, Ludlow'—he turned with his hand on the door, and there was a very

genuine, little shake in his voice.—'I think you might spare a crumb of pity for me from all the big leaves you are lavishing on her, for, by Jove, I don't think the pain is all on her side.'

BEEHIVE HUTS.

By S. BARING-GOULD.

IN Dr Mitchell's *The Past in the Present*, one of the series of Rhind Lectures, the author describes his amazement on visiting the island of Lewis, in the Hebrides, to find there hovels inhabited by human beings that have been generally supposed to have belonged to a prehistoric savage period of our islands. He says: 'My first visit to one of these houses was paid in 1866 in the company of Captain Thomas. They are commonly spoken of as beehive houses, but their Gaelic name is "bo'h" or "bothan." They are now only used as temporary residences or sheilings by those who herd cattle at their summer pasturage; but at a time not very remote they are believed to have been the permanent dwelling of the people. I cannot suit my present purpose better than by telling what Captain Thomas and I saw on the occasion of the visit to which I have referred. At Larach Tigh Dhubhstail, the summer pasturage of the tenants of Crolisra, we found one of these beehive houses actually tenanted, and the family happened to be at home. It consisted of three young women. It was Sunday, and they had made their toilet with care at the burn, and had put on their printed calico gowns. None of them could speak English; but they were not illiterate, for one of them was reading a Gaelic Bible. They showed no alarm at our coming, but invited us into the "bo'h," and hospitably treated us to milk. They were courteously dignified, neither feeling nor affecting to feel embarrassment. There was no evidence of any understanding on their part that we should experience surprise at their surroundings. I confess, however, to having shown, as well as felt, the effects of the wine of astonishment. I do not know I ever came upon a scene which more surprised me, and I scarcely know where or how to begin my description of it.

'By the side of a burn we saw two small round hive-like hillocks, not much higher than a man, joined together and covered with grass and weeds. Out of the top of one of them a column of smoke slowly rose; and at its base there was a hole about three feet high and two feet wide, which seemed to lead into the interior of the hillock—its hollowness, and the possibility of its having a human creature within it, being thus suggested. The dwelling consisted of two apartments opening into each other. Though externally the two blocks looked round in their outline, and were in fact nearly so, internally the one apartment might be described as irregularly round, and the other as irregularly square. The rounder of the two was the larger, and was the dwelling-room; the squarish and smaller one was the storeroom for the milk and food. The floor-space of this last was about six feet each way. That of the other was about six feet in its shorter and nine feet in its longer diameter.

The greatest height of the living-room—in its centre, that is—was scarcely six feet. The door of communication between the two rooms was so small that we could get through it only by creeping. The creeping was only a little less real in getting through the equally tunnel-like, though somewhat wider and loftier passage, which led from the open air into the hut or dwelling-room. At the right-hand side on entering there was the fireplace. The smoke escaped at a small opening at the apex of the door. The floor was divided into two spaces by a row of curb-stones eight or more inches high. These served as seats, the only seats in the house; but they at the same time cut off the part of the floor on which the inmates slept, the bed, in short—the whole space behind the row of stones being covered with hay and rushes. In the part of the wall bounding the bed there were three niches or presses, in which, among other things, we observed a hair-comb and some newly-made cheeses.

The walls of these Beehive Huts are made of stone, undressed, laid in rude courses; and the dome is constructed by bringing the courses to overlap, till at length they are drawn together so closely all round as to leave nothing but a small hole, which may be closed at pleasure with a turf or a stone, or left open to admit light and allow the escape of smoke.

In some cases the houses are more extensive, with several chambers, all constructed in the same manner, and all domed in the same fashion, so as to resemble a series of conical hills united at their base.

But what is exceedingly interesting in the description of the Lewis houses in occupation is that they resemble precisely a number of ruined structures scattered over not Scotland only, but the moors of Devon and Cornwall as far as the Land's End, so that the description of the house in Lewis might be taken as that of one on the tract of moor that stretches from Bodmin to Camelford, or, indeed, of numerous ruined prehistoric settlements on Dartmoor. Not only so, but it inevitably reminds the reader of the internal structure of a great many cairns and tumuli for the dead. In fact, there can be very little doubt that the mansions of the dead were at one epoch made in very close resemblance to their habitations when alive, and that their habitations when alive were beehive huts.

The rude stone monuments in Scotland have been very carefully examined and planned, and among these are the sepulchral chambers in the cairns both circular and oblong. They present very much the same character, of passages leading into chambers, these chambers either roofed over by broad slabs of stone or domed by narrowing layers of stone. There are frequently small side compartments for the dead, very much as in life they may have had compartments in their beehive huts for their beds.

There are to be found in Cornwall some of these beehive huts almost as perfect as when first constructed. Originally, indeed, they were embedded in peat-banks, or walls of turf to the width of nine feet. This has in a great number of cases disappeared. It has been washed away by the rains, so that only the skeleton, so to speak, of the old house remains, the stonework

which was not originally exposed. There is, however, on the south flank of Dartmoor, on the side of the river Erme, a beehive hut that is still in great part buried in its turf case, now luxuriantly overgrown by heather. The entrance consists of two granite jambs about two feet six inches high with a granite lintel, still in place. On crawling within, the structure is seen to be precisely that of the Hebridean beehive houses. It is domed over by layers of overlapping stones.

It is the same with several under Brownwilly, the highest of the Cornish tors, and sufficiently remote from habitations not to have become a quarry for builders. The top of Brownwilly consists of a ridge with five peaks of granite; on two of these are great cairns, that have never been explored. A little way under the brow of the hill to the east, below the easternmost cairn, are two almost perfect beehive huts nestled like swallows' nests into the rocks. One joins on to the other very much like the structure in the Hebrides described by Dr Mitchell, only that the storeroom is but four feet six inches in diameter. Both are part domed and part roofed with covering slabs, and natural rocks have been utilised for one side of each.

Below Brownwilly is a solitary farm, and between the farm and the stream is a beehive hut quite perfect, even to the smoke-hole, with the stone at top covering it. This chamber is rudely square within. It is quite possible that this, like the Hebridean huts, may be of much more recent construction, may even conceivably not be more than a hundred years old. In which case in Cornwall, as in the Hebrides, the old mode of construction in use in primeval times has been blindly followed to a comparatively modern period. This is possible in Cornwall; in the Western Isles it is certain.

But not only does the description of the 'bo'h' still in use apply in its general features to the beehive huts of the west of England, but it does also in even minute particulars, such as the division of the main apartment by curbstones to form the bed. Even these stones are found—or one is much deceived in some of the remains of beehive huts on Dartmoor and in Cornwall, and without the light thrown on their significance from actual usage by Dr Mitchell, the antiquary exploring with the spade among the ruined hut circles in the west of England would be much puzzled to account for the divisions his spade encounters when making out the plan of the floor. The little lockers Dr Mitchell saw in use are also found in the prehistoric dwellings, though no longer containing cheeses and hair-combs.

These beehive huts are found in clusters, villages, almost towns of them, though rarely with their domes complete, for in probably the majority of cases they were not stone domed, but roofed over with logs or poles brought together in the centre, and covered with thatching of straw or ling.

Dr Mitchell informs us that many of the primitive cottages in the Hebrides have their roofs pulled off and renewed every year because of the value as manure of the thatching impregnated with peat-smoke and black with soot. It may have been the same with the prehistoric cottages; but certainly only here and there was one domed

over with stone, the majority were merely thatched.

That these habitations belonged originally to a people who erected megalithic monuments can hardly be questioned, as almost invariably a village of circular huts has on the hill above it cairns containing kistvaens, and very generally avenues or circles of upright stones in its neighbourhood. In many if not most cases in Devon and Cornwall, this people was a mining people and worked for tin. The settlements are generally associated with old tin stream-works. And the workings may be observed to turn round and avoid a spur of ground occupied by some of the huts. That the people were a flint-working race is also apparent from the numbers of flint weapons and chips found near these settlements. And the flint not being found near, had to be brought, and was an object of barter with the natives of the chalk and flint districts.

We do not know enough of the primitive population of the British Isles to say which was the beehive hut dwelling race. But it is certainly remarkable that in Devon and Cornwall, where not only the Cymric branch of the Celt came, but also the Gael, leaving traces in the forms of the names of places and people, that we should find houses of precisely similar construction to those still extant, and still used in the Gaelic islands in the west of Scotland.

At the same time it would be unsafe to rush to a conclusion from such coincidences. If we turn to Mr Hall's 'Life among the Esquimaux,' we find that this primitive people construct their igloos or snow-houses on a precisely similar pattern, even to the raised platform for the bed. Primitive man is much alike everywhere, and to whatever race he belongs, he seeks out the simplest form of habitation, and it is only as he advances in civilisation that he varies his type, and that he becomes impatient of the simplicity and rudeness of the habitations of his ancestors.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XXXIX.—OUT OF THE 'CORNER.'

WHILE Suffield pondered during the next day or two how it could be brought home to Gorgonio that the five hundred pound note which he had received from Tanderjee was his share of the Tanderjee cotton fraud—which Suffield did not for a moment doubt—a letter was on its way to him from Marseilles from his son concerning this very matter. George was returning home with both criminals; but they were all so worn with fatigue that they could not set out so soon or travel with such speed as the letter, which was mainly written to advise the arrest of Gorgonio (if possible): Tanderjee had denounced him as a participator not only in the cotton fraud, but also in the theft of the plans!

That letter reached him at a critical moment, and with it in his pocket he went to Liverpool to call on Gorgonio. It was only three days to the 31st of January, when all the cotton transactions in which Gorgonio and his son were involved must close, and when the

final reckoning must be made up according to the prices with which the month would close. He was therefore determined to make a final effort, by means of a threat, to encourage Gorgonio to get rid of most of the cotton promises at a tolerable price before the final, fatal day. When Suffield entered Gorgonio's office, the latter merely sat back in his chair and waited: their relations were too strained for the exchange of civilities.

'More than a month ago, Mr Gorgonio,' said Suffield, taking a seat, 'you received from Mr Tanderjee one of several notes for five hundred pounds, the which he had received from the bank in payment of a cheque which my son gave him: would you mind telling me why Tanderjee gave you that note?'

Gorgonio looked at his claws a moment and then at Suffield. 'Yes,' said he, 'I remember. Tanderjee gave it to me in way of business—yes; in payment of matter of business between myself and Tanderjee.'

'Will you swear, if required, that the matter of business for which Tanderjee paid was not the help you had given in his cotton fraud, and in another matter concerning my affairs which I will not name at present?'

'Who say that, Mr Suffiel?'

'Tanderjee has,' answered Suffield calmly.

'Tanderjee?' Gorgonio looked about him in perplexity. 'When can Tanderjee have say that? Tanderjee is gone!'

'But he will come again!' said Suffield. 'He is on the way back now—under the charge of my son and a detective.'

'Ah—that, then, is the reason,' exclaimed Gorgonio in a burst of enlightenment, 'why Mr Suffiel, younger, go away on voyage! That is so!'

'Well, then, Mr Gorgonio, is Tanderjee a liar?—or, has he told the truth?'

'Tanderjee is liar, certainly! I will tell him he is liar, to the face—when he come!'

'Will you be prepared, when Tanderjee and the other man stand their trial, to clear your character, and give the details of the business for which Tanderjee paid you five hundred pounds?'

'I will, Mr Suffiel!—Pon my sacred word of honour, I will!'

'Mr Gorgonio,' Suffield broke forth at length, 'I believe you to be a creature without honour or honesty!—to be a liar and a thief! It would do me good to be able to kick you into the street, and down the street, and into the Mersey—and so out of England, which creatures like you pollute wth your presence! But I can't afford to do that! It is my deplorable lot at present to be tied to you—sink or swim! You would be glad if I sank, I know; but—please Providence!—I don't mean to sink if I can make use of a reptile like you!—you've done badly for me in this cotton business, for your own ends, as I believe, though—God help me!—I can't prove it! But now I give you one chance to do better! There are three days left! If by the end of that time you haven't unloaded at a fair price, at least three-fourths of these responsibilities that still remain—I can't

in reason ask you to do more than that in the time, but you know how to manage it'—

'I cannot!—no man can!—do that—I have say again and again, Mr Suffield, that you cannot unload much and not send down the price! And it is not possible to unload so much as you say in three days at any price!'

'Then,' said Suffield, 'I shall have you arrested to stand your trial with the two others! If you accomplish what I ask, I shall say no more about this!—That is my last word!'

Suffield rose to go; and there was about Gorgonio, as he leaned over the table, and, with a snarl on his lip, glared at the big Englishman over his hunched shoulder, something of the ugly, obscene suggestion of the hyena at bay in his cage—some hint of the brute's evil temper, evil colour, and bristling back.

'I will try to accomplish what you say. It is difficulty; but I will do it!'

'Very well,' said Suffield, and went.

It was a desperate task that Gorgonio had promised, under compulsion, to perform—so desperate, that he would seem to have soon determined to abandon it. For the past fortnight he had really sold much less than he had reported to Suffield that he had sold, holding on with the gambler's hope of emerging on the last day of the month in possession of a considerable 'corner,' and so of forcing up prices and reaping his profit in spite of Suffield, even if he also made—as he would make—a profit for Suffield too. But when the sturdy Suffield presented his ultimatum, he had a horrible vision of final ruin, of trial in a terrible English court, where a man cannot bribe, of imprisonment in an English jail, whence it is difficult for a man to escape: then panic seized him—as in an unforeseen emergency it often does seize the craftiest, coolest man and the most savage and courageous brute—his nerve went, and he could think of nothing but flight.

In the afternoon of the day before the last, Suffield received a telegram signed 'Gorgonio,' and demanding an immediate interview. Suffield went; but when he arrived at Gorgonio's office he found no Gorgonio. He was received by the confidential clerk of Gorgonio, who said that his master had not been in town all day, nor had sent any explanatory word; that he (the clerk) had first telegraphed to his home in the suburbs, and had then gone to it: the house was shut up, and no news of Gorgonio was to be had! The only possible conclusion was that Gorgonio had fled!

'And,' said Suffield, 'if I have driven him out of Lancashire, and perhaps out of England, I shall reckon I ha' deserved well o' my country! But he must ha' gone because this business is in a bad way.—You're an Englishman, I hope, my lad?'

'I'm a Welshman, Mr Suffield,' said the young man with a smile.

'That's the same thing, my lad. I can trust tha. Tha knows all Gorgonio's business, I suppose? Well, then, show me all this business, and help me to decide what's to be done, and thou shannot lose by it.'

So they sat down together and went through the records of all the transactions; and it became evident to Suffield that comparatively little had

been sold—that more than one hundred thousand bales of contracts still remained.

'Why, Mr Suffield,' said the young man, 'you command the market yet! If you don't sell to-morrow—if you decide to hold the corner—prices will go up, and you will make a big haul!'

For one hesitating moment a vision danced before Suffield of a profit, instead of a loss—his apparently prosperous position maintained and established instead of shrunk into something like poverty; his daughter's distinguished marriage coming to fruition instead of being perhaps blighted; and his wife's innocent ambitions fulfilled instead of thrust into the limbo of first-loves, broken promises, and wasted efforts. The dream lasted but a moment: the next he had recovered himself.

'No,' said he, 'I'll sell out! I'd rather lose half my capital than ha' it said of me I ever made a penny by cornering! Sell out, my lad; sell carefully and craftily, so as not to scare the prices—but sell!'

He decided, after a little hesitation, that there would be no advantage in his remaining in Liverpool for the last day, especially since he desired that he should not be openly identified with this business; and he left the confidential young man with the assurance that he trusted him, and the encouragement to do his best.

The record of the last day is common property: was it not written and published in all the newspapers of the principality, under the heading 'Final Collapse of the Corner?' Thus the leading Liverpool daily wrote of it: 'On the last day the opening quotation of the market was 6-15, and for the first hour it ran down and up with remarkable uncertainty till 6-10 was reached. It then became evident that many "bulls" had been riding on the back of the leading operator, in the hope that he would help the market at the close. It was remarked as strange that the leading operator, Gorgonio, had not been seen; but it was rumoured that he had been quietly selling through another. The rumour spread, and then others scrambled to get out; and the prices fell down, down till 5-16 was reached as twelve o'clock struck.'

All the while Suffield was in telegraphic communication with Liverpool. Messages came regularly, marking, as it were, the quarters of each hour, and chronicling in the most unfeeling way the fluctuation, and then the steady declension, of the prices; and at the same time a clerk was kept passing to and fro between the office and the Exchange to check the telegrams by the prices registered there. Thus the quarters passed rapidly away, until half-past eleven. At that hour Suffield left the office and went on 'Change to 'see the last of it,' as he said to himself. He walked up the noble crowded hall, and as he passed to his usual station the hubbub was hushed, and all eyes were turned on him, to observe how he was taking it. The anxiety of the past month had wrought a greater change on him than he was aware: the careless, boyish ruddiness of his cheek was gone, and his hair had become white. He was there to show that the worst would not break him, that he still meant to hold his head up among his fellows, and that if there was any man on 'Change had aught against him, he was ready to listen to his

demand; and there was more than one creditor there who had meant to descend upon him, but who, seeing him, held his hand: they were proud now to have so much personal interest in him as to have him in their debt.

About ten minutes to noon his clerk brought him a telegram reporting that the price was 5-16, and that there still remained so many bales.

'Thank God!' said he. 'It might be worse!'

He lingered a few minutes longer, chatting to old acquaintances about other things than cotton; and then, when the hour struck which closed the business of the last day of the month on the Liverpool Cotton Exchange, he left his place and walked out. He had sacrificed the corner, but he had saved his business; and they all guessed it! The throng, as if involuntarily, made an avenue for him and took off their hats as he passed—an action to which he responded by taking off his own—and as he went out at the wide portal, a ringing cheer broke forth: 'Bravo, George!'

Suffield's heart was stirred within him, and reinvigorated. 'I'm turned fifty,' he said to himself, 'but I'll make my business again!—And now I'll sleep to-night!'

JOTTINGS ABOUT BANK-NOTES.

In the British Museum there is a very old and very rare Chinese Bank-note. It was issued in the reign of Hung-woo, the founder of the Ning dynasty, who died in 1398. The face-value of the note is about a dollar; but it is one of the only issue of paper currency ever guaranteed by the Chinese Government. (Only another similar note is said to be in existence, being in possession of the Oriental Society of St Petersburg.) Its value to native bankers and note-collectors all over China is well known. The late Governor of Hong-kong, Sir John Pope Hennessy, bought the note about twelve years ago at an auction of the effects of a deceased Captain of one of the Chinese Customs cruisers, who had amassed a large collection of Chinese coins and notes, amongst which was this Ning bank-note. The Captain had acquired it for a very considerable sum from the successors of a continental banker, who had been a collector of rare Chinese coins and bank-notes. Sir John was in the habit of leaving it for safe-keeping in the custody of the authorities of the British Museum. The note is said to answer the description of the paper which, according to Marco Polo, the Great Khan, six hundred years ago, caused 'to pass for money all over his country.' What they take is a fine white bast, or skin, which lies between the wood of the trees and the thick outer bark, and this they make into something resembling sheets of paper, but black.

Bank-notes were issued in China as early as the ninth century, when the art of printing was unknown in Europe. These notes have generally been redeemed, because in China, when a bank fails, all the clerks and managers have their heads chopped off and thrown in a heap along with the books of the firm. And so it has happened in these good old barbarous times that for the past

five hundred years not a single Chinese bank has suspended payment. Now that China is coming under the sway of Western civilisation, we have no doubt it will have the same financial troubles as its more civilised banking brethren.

Since the English one pound bank-note was abolished in 1821, a preference has arisen in England for the sovereign, although the value of the latter is often diminished by what is known as 'sweating,' by attrition, and by the tear and wear of daily use; whereas the one pound note suffers rather by violence, and its face-value, with ordinary usage, remains unimpaired. We are informed that Americans when they come to England are astonished at our use of specie in ordinary business, and express their surprise that we have not adopted the fractional currency which they find so convenient. An eminent banker remarked the other day: 'Payment in coin is, after all, the method of barbarous people; and the time may come when a man getting out of a hansom at his door will pay the driver with a small note like a postage stamp.'

Bank-notes have an individuality which gold lacks, and being easily identified when 'ear-marked,' serve often as links in the chain of criminal detection. This was illustrated a few years ago during what was known as the 'turf frauds.' The complicity of several detectives in that elaborate conspiracy was discovered through a bank-note of a large denomination being presented for payment. Because of a theft of notes of a certain bank, all the notes of that denomination had been recalled from circulation, with the view of isolating the stolen notes that were outstanding. One day, a note of this description was cashed to a respectable person at a branch of the bank that had issued the notes. The banker at once informed a police official of the transaction, and said it had the name of a leading detective officer on the back of the note. The police official obtained the name, and wrote up forthwith to the metropolitan authorities on the subject. No reply came. At the end of some days, business called him to London, and he asked the chief of the department to which he had written if his letter had been received. 'What letter?' was asked. None had reached him, as it had been destroyed, to avert suspicion. A duplicate of it was at once wired for; a clue was established to the crime; and in the end a gigantic conspiracy of detectives and criminals was unravelled and exposed.

Bank-notes have curious histories attached to them in the way of human comedy, tragedy, and melodrama. A collector at Paris of such curiosities got hold, some years ago, of a five-pound Bank of England note which had somewhat of a tragic interest connected with it. Some sixty odd years ago the cashier of a Liverpool merchant had received in tender for a business payment a Bank of England note which he held up to the scrutiny of the light, so as to make sure of its genuineness. He observed some partially indistinct red marks of words traced out on the front of the note beside the lettering and on the margin. Curiosity tempted him to try to decipher the words so inscribed. With great difficulty, so faintly written were they and so much obliterated, the words were found to form the following sentence: 'If this note should fall into the hands of John Dean,

of Longhill, near Carlisle, he will learn hereby that his brother is languishing a prisoner in Algiers.' Mr Dean, on being shown the note, lost no time in asking the Government of the day to make intercession for his brother's freedom. It appeared that for eleven long years the latter had been a slave to the Dey of Algiers, and that his family and relatives believed him to be dead. With a piece of wood he had traced in his own blood on the bank-note the message which was to procure his release. The Government aided the efforts of his brother to set him free, this being accomplished on payment of a ransom to the Dey. Unfortunately, the captive did not long enjoy his liberty, his bodily sufferings while working as a slave in Algiers having undermined his constitution.

A famous historical inscription is that which Lord Cochrane, the great seaman, penned on a one thousand pound Bank of England note which he tendered in payment of what was afterwards pronounced to be an unjust fine. He had been debarred, during his period of imprisonment, of the common privilege of taking open-air exercise in the prison-yard, to the detriment of his health. There was no alternative left him but to pay. He thus expressed himself on the back of the note: 'Grated chamber, King's Bench Prison, July 3d 1815.—My health having suffered by long and close confinement, and my oppressors being resolved to deprive me of property or life, I submit to Robbery to protect myself from Murder, in the hope that I shall live to bring the delinquents to justice.'—(Signed) COCHRANE.

On the 6th of August of the same year, a collection was made in the parish church of Sorn, Ayrshire, in aid of the Waterloo Fund, when thirteen guineas were received. On one of the notes then put into the box the following lines were written:

FOR THE SUFFERERS AT WATERLOO.

Yes! there were deeds of wonder done
Round Britain's flag, to death unfur'd:
The chaplet torn, the laurels won,
From bands who conquer'd half the world.

Another contribution to bank-note literature is found in Lockhart's 'Life of Scott.' Lady Louisa Stuart sent the great novelist a copy of some lines which were also written on a guinea note, then in possession of Lady Douglas. They were as follows:

Farewell! my note, and wheresoe'er ye wend,
Shun gaudy scenes, and be the poor man's friend.
You've left a poor man; go to one as poor,
And drive despair and hunger from his door.

Sir Walter expressed himself as very much pleased with these lines. Their sentiment seems to have struck a congenial chord in his benevolent breast, for he added: 'I think it will give the author great delight to know that his lines had attracted attention, and *had* sent the paper on which they were recorded, heaven-directed to the poor.'

Robert Burns knew the value of Scotch notes. In a letter to Mr M'Murdo, dated December 1793, he says: 'But for these dirty dog-eared little pages,' &c. This, unfortunately indicated what was the poet's normal pecuniary condition. When thinking to leave for Jamaica in 1780, he penned the following lines on the back of a

guinea note of the Bank of Scotland, which had then as now a branch in Dumfries:

Wae worth thy power, thou cursed leaf!
Tell source o' a' my woe and grief!

For lack o' thee I leave this much-loved shore,
Never perhaps to greet old Scotland more.

Happily for Scotch poesy, Burns did not go to the West Indies, but remained at home to pour out the treasures of his muse.

The 'leaf' on which Burns wrote this inscription was a one pound note of the Bank of Scotland issue of 1st March 1780, as Scott Douglas states in his edition of the poet's works. The lines are believed from their internal marks to have been written about August 1786, and they appear to have been first printed in the 'Morning Chronicle' of 27th May 1814, being subsequently transferred to the 'Scots Magazine' in the following September.

There is a great deal of writing on bank-notes which is mainly the product of the love of scribbling possessed by a good many persons. Much of it is ridiculous rhyme unworthy of repetition; but occasionally it is smart and apposite to the purpose of bank-notes. A sample or two of such writings may be given. On a pound note appeared the following:

Ye ugly, dirty, little scrap!
To look at, hardly worth a rap;
And yet I'll give my hearty vote
None can produce a sweeter note.

Another inscription is:

It's odd that any man should wish
A dirty, scabbie rag like this;
Yet mony a ane would cut a caper
To get a wheen sic bits o' paper.

This other quotation contains a blend of sentiment and pessimistic reflection:

Ye're my ain, ye're my ain,
And to keep ye, I'd be fain;
But the poor man can never keep his cash;
For 'twill gang, quickly gang,
Like an easy-goin' sang,
Let ye be however carefu' or rash.

Oh! money's no the thing for the poor man to keep;
Oh! little's the interest that the poor man's cash can reap;
It maun gang to fill the coffers o' the rich and the great;
And I, like a' the rest, must quietly bow to fate.

When bank-notes are presented for payment in a defective condition, from whatever cause, it is the practice of some banks to pay according to the proportion of the note which is presented. Thus, if four-fifths of a one-pound note were tendered to a bank, it would pay sixteen shillings to the owner; and if two-thirds of a five-pound note were offered, the bank would give the owner three pounds six shillings and eightpence only. Other banks are in the habit of paying the amount claimed, or nothing at all. In every case, an affidavit must be subscribed before a justice of the peace in support of each claim, which must contain a narrative of the circumstances attending the partial or, as sometimes happens, the complete destruction of the note. In the latter case, the bank when it makes payment always insists on a guarantee.

As may be supposed, the greatest amount of

claims in connection with the destruction of notes arises in Scotland after the New-year's holidays and convivial seasons generally. Pipe-lighting is the commonest form of destruction, notes especially for one pound being stowed away in any pocket handy and used as if they were mere match-paper. These notes get torn in domestic brawls, are snatched at by thieves, and occasionally thrown into the fire, to be hurriedly extricated from the flames. Dogs, cattle, sheep, and cats chew them. Landladies have been known to wash their lodger's garments containing notes, reducing them in the process to a sad state of pulp. Hens have pecked at them, pigs have gulped them, mice have nibbled them, and even jackdaws have stolen them to coat their nests. Notes indeed are liable to many vicissitudes, being wholly at the mercy of their owners. In the north of Scotland, most claims arise from fishermen, whose bank-notes suffer from the varied incidents which take place in the pursuit of so perilous a calling.

Bank-notes have not now so long an existence as formerly. When Bank of England notes re-enter the portals of the Bank of England, they never return into circulation, it not being the practice of the Bank of England to issue them a second time. If notes are stopped payment at the Bank of England, it must be done under a guarantee, which usually takes the form of an assignment of Government stock in security to the Bank of England, and is of the value of the notes stopped. There is a story which goes so far back as the year 1740, and it is to the effect that a director of the Bank of England of that day lost a bank-note for thirty thousand pounds. It was said to have been carried by a draught of air up the chimney, where it lodged in an out-of-the-way crevice. Its fate was not known at the time to the director, who supposed it destroyed, for he made a successful claim on the Bank for the amount. Years afterwards, when the building was being dismantled, the masons engaged in taking to pieces the chimney discovered the note in question. The Bank had to pay the value of the note again on its presentation by the heirs of the deceased director, for the latter had come under no obligation to indemnify the bank in the event of the missing bank-note making its appearance.

The Scotch bank-notes in circulation are not nearly so dirty as they used to be. The great majority of the notes have an existence of from one to two years, and many of them much less. They are withdrawn from circulation whenever their external appearance is unsatisfactory, and are consigned to the flames, the close retort being most commonly used in their destruction. Several banks have big occasional burnings; while others have numerous burnings for smaller amounts.

The life of a Bank of France note is about two years, it being issued so long as it is usable. In the matter of destroying their notes set apart for cancellation, a new departure has been made by the Bank of France. The former practice was to incarcerate their doomed notes for three years in a large oak chest before submitting them to conflagration. Thereupon, a huge fire was set afloat in an open court; the notes were thrown into a sort of revolving wire-cage, which was kept rotating over the fire; and the minute

particles of note-ash escaped into the air through the meshes of the cage and darkened the atmosphere all around. The burnings took place daily, and were of a certain amount. Now, the practice is to have about twenty cancellations of notes each year, at uncertain times, and as the needs of the service determine. A hole is punched in each of the notes, which are also stamped as follows: 'Cancelled the _____ by the branch at _____, or the Head Office of the Bank of France.' The notes are then marked off in the registers of Bank Notes Issued, according to their numbers and descriptions. A Committee of the Bank directors are present at their destruction. The cancelled notes are no longer burned, but are now reduced into pulp by means of chemical agents. Each destruction of notes averages about six hundred thousand of all kinds; and about twelve million notes are annually destroyed. The Bank of France has been little troubled of late with forgeries. The greatest forger it ever had was deported to Cayenne, and in attempting to escape, got stuck in a swamp, and was eaten to death by crabs.

Like the Bank of France, the Imperial Bank of Germany has no set time for destroying its notes. It only does so when a stock of cancelled notes has accumulated in its hands. These notes have a hole punched out of them. The agency employed in their destruction is fire, a close furnace being used, so that the possibility of any particles of burnt notes making their escape therefrom may be put beyond a doubt. The notes are placed in this furnace beside some lighted straw, which sets the notes aflame. No fuel, whether of coal or wood, is used, the notes, fanned by a current of air, maintaining their own fire, and burning until they are wholly consumed. The economy of this arrangement may be noted. The Imperial Bank of Germany has burned 10,355,364 notes within the last ten years, and of the following denominations: 686,460 notes of one thousand marks (£50); 517,030 notes of five hundred marks (£25); and 9,151,874 notes of one hundred marks (£5).

With the Bank of England, the destruction of its notes takes place about once a week and at seven p.m. It used to be done in the daytime, but made such a smell that the neighbouring stockbrokers petitioned the Governors to do it in the evening. The notes are previously cancelled by punching a hole through the amount (in figures) and tearing off the signature of the chief cashier. The notes are burned in a closed furnace, and the only agency employed is shavings and bundles of wood. They used to be burnt in a cage, the result of which was that once a week the City was darkened with burnt fragments of notes. For future purposes of reference, the notes are left for five years before being burned.

The number of notes coming in to the Bank of England every day is about fifty thousand; and three hundred and fifty thousand are destroyed every week, or something like eighteen millions every year.

The stock of paid notes for five years is about 77,745,000 in number, and they fill 13,400 boxes, which, if placed side by side, would reach two and one-third miles. If the notes were placed in a pile, they would reach to a height of five and two-third miles; or if joined end to end,

would form a ribbon 12,455 miles long. Their superficial extent is rather less than that of Hyde Park; their original value was over £1,750,626,600; and their weight over ninety and two-third tons.

THE CAMERA-OBSCURA.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

I LEFT the little wooden house wondering what was best to be done. Should I go straight to Helston or Falmouth for help, and bring a strong body of men direct to the underground cave? Or should I arrange matters so that the Nanjulians might be caught in the midst of their spoil? The latter course seemed most desirable to me. I remembered the sneers and sly laughter which had so often greeted my approach when they thought I had been engaged in watching their movements. I had gone home with tingling ears many a time when they had laughed at me in this way, and had comforted myself at such times by thinking that I should ultimately have the laugh at them. That time was come at last. Was it likely I would let the opportunity slip?

I made a hasty adieu to Bertha and her father, and went along the cliffs in the direction of Porthlock. My first intention was to proceed to Falmouth and get sufficient help for that night's work; but, as I thought the matter over, I decided not to do anything hasty. I wanted to win as much glory and credit by the affair as I possibly could, and it seemed to me that I had better exercise some ingenuity. For example, I was not yet certain that I had hit upon the right track. The cavern under the rock might not conceal the contraband goods of the Nanjulian tribe. To be sure I had no doubt about it in my own mind; but it would be as well to make the certainty absolute. If only I could get inside that cave and see for myself what its contents were, my doubts would be set at rest. But how to do it?

I went along the cliffs until I was exactly above the Six Sisters. There was not a soul in sight just there. Far away, nearly at Porthlock, I saw a black speck going along the level sands, which I believed to be the Nanjulian who had spread the sand over the trap-door after his brothers had gone into the cave. That seemed to indicate a long stay in the cavern. It would perhaps be advisable for me to hide myself, and watch for some one coming to release the men. Sooner or later, they would have to come out. When they were once away, I might find a chance of investigating their hiding-place.

I always carried food in my pocket, never knowing how long I might be kept out of the reach of my usual meals. I was therefore prepared to spend a long day watching the rock below. I went cautiously down the face of the cliff, and found a hiding-place where it was impossible for any one to see me, either from the cliffs above or from the sands beneath. Into this I crept, and fortified my mind for a long vigil by thinking what a fine thing this capture would turn out for me.

The day passed on slowly, more slowly, I think, than any day I ever remember. Morning

went, afternoon passed, and the winter evening soon came. I began to feel cold and numbed, though I had my thickest clothing on. I could now only just see the rock. The tide was nearly at its height, and four of the Six Sisters were almost submerged. Then, with an anathema on my own stupidity, I saw that it was impossible for any one to reach the fifth and sixth rocks by way of the shore. The tide made that impracticable. The men in the cave, then, would have to remain there until low tide, unless they had some means of letting themselves out. I hardly saw how they could do that, however. It did not seem possible for them to raise the trap-door from below. I left my hiding-place and went up the cliffs again. The moon had come out, and as the night was sharp and clear, there was a good view of any object on the headlands. At a little distance stood old Mother Trethewy's cottage, a solitary ramshackle old hut, in which no one but herself would have lived. She, however, being half-witch, half-ghoul, liked it probably from kindred feeling for aught that was weird and eerie.

There was a bright light in Mother Trethewy's window, which suggested heat, and consequent warmth. I thought it would do me no harm to spend a few minutes before the old woman's fire, and I went up to the door and knocked. She came to answer the summons with alacrity, and I fancied that she was rather disappointed on seeing my face.

'Let me come in and warm myself a moment, Mother,' I said, stepping across the threshold. 'It's terribly cold to-night on the headlands.'

'You're welcome,' she croaked, eyeing me, however, with anything but welcoming glances. —'Aw, 'tis terrible weather for a poor old woman like me.'

'Well, you've got a grand fire anyway, Mother.'

'It be driftwood, driftwood, just driftwood. A weary climb I do have many a day in summer to bring un up from the beach below.'

I sat down on a stool in front of the fire and spread out my hands to the blaze. The ancient crone sat down in her chair by the hearthstone and watched me. I tried to make her talk; but she was evidently not inclined to hold conversation with me. She kept glancing at me out of her wicked old eyes, as if I disturbed her.

'You've a nice quiet place here, Mother,' I said. 'No disturbing voices or anything to bother you. You'—

Just then a strange sound seemed to come from beneath my very feet. It was like somebody striking two or three blows with a heavy hammer under the floor of the cottage. I looked at the old woman in astonishment. She was obviously very ill at ease.

'What's that?' I said. 'I heard a sound.'

'A deal o' quare sounds there is here,' she croaked. 'They do say the place be haanted; but ne'er a sperrit have I seen. What wi' sounds and cockroaches, I do be pestered a'most to death. They cockroaches—there, that's the sixth I ha' killed to-night.'

She caught up a heavy poker and brought the point down with considerable force on a black speck on the hearthstone which might have been either a cockroach or a cinder. She was evidently

not satisfied with one blow, for she delivered one, two, three on the unfortunate object of her resentment, each resounding sharply from the hard stone. This done, she poked the ashes over the crushed speck.

'Well, I'm pretty warm now, Mother Trethewy,' I said; and bidding her good-night, left the cottage and went away along the cliff. Turning round, I saw her watching me from the doorway. I kept on my path.

But I did not intend to go far. Two matters had set me thinking. What did that dull knocking under my feet mean, and why did Mother Trethewy answer it as she did with three hard taps of her poker? Did it not mean that there was some one under the cottage who wanted to get out, and that Mother Trethewy had signalled to him, or them, that the coast was not clear? A third matter seemed to hold some relation to the other two. In one corner of the cottage stood a strong crowbar. What did an old woman like that want with a crowbar? It might have been left there by her dead husband—true! but it had been recently and constantly used, for the point was bright.

I went along the cliffs until a turn hid me from the cottage, and then I doubled, and went back to a point from which I commanded Mother Trethewy's door. I waited there, secured from observation, for nearly half an hour. At last the door opened and four men came out. They passed close by me, going towards Porthlock, and I recognised them as Matthew, Simon, Cleophas, and Pharos Nanjulian.

So at last, thanks to chance, I had come across the Nanjulians' secret. Underneath my feet lay their cave, with its sea-entrance at the Six Sisters, and its land exit in Mother Trethewy's cottage. I went homewards in good spirits. I would find my way into that cave and examine its contents for myself. That done, a raid should be made on the whole gang.

I occupied myself for hours that night in wondering how I could get into the cave. If I had not been so young and hasty, I should have sought superior counsel. As it was, I wanted to keep the matter all to myself, so that I might have all the glory and credit. My feeling was that I would not share the honour with a second party. It did not strike me that two heads are always better than one.

How to get into the cave unaided?—that was the question. I went to sleep thinking about it, and fell to thinking again as soon as I woke in the morning. Standing on the quay-side during the forenoon, I saw the Nanjulians, one and all, man their boats and go out to sea with several other Porthlock craft in company. I knew then that they would be away all day, and made up my mind to enter the cave in their absence.

At last a thought struck me: I must trick old Mother Trethewy. I must get her out of her cottage for some hours, and make use of the entrance, which I had no doubt I should find in the floor. A capital ruse soon occurred to me. The old woman sometimes went out nursing or laying-out dead bodies. I would send her a message telling her to go over to St Mirions, a village three miles inland, there to lay-out a fictitious person. She would go quickly enough, I knew, if there was promise of money.

There was a lad in Porthlock who had taken a great fancy to me, a lad who was somewhat of a harum-scarum type, and never up to anything but lurking and loafing round the quay-pool. I resolved to press young Nick Perran into my service. It was rather a scurvy trick to play on the old woman, but in dealing with rogues it is sometimes unavoidable to destroy them with their own weapons.

I found Nick Perran readily enough, and was soon walking with him in the direction of Mother Trethewy's cottage. He was delighted at the prospect of doing anything for me, and I had soon instructed him in his part. He was to knock at the door and tell Mrs Trethewy that she was wanted at the 'King George' inn at St Mirions to lay-out the body of a traveller who had died there suddenly. He was to give her five shillings, and say that fifteen more would be paid her when the work was done. When he had delivered his message, he was to go straight home to Porthlock.

I hid myself behind a conveniently placed rock while Nick advanced to Mother Trethewy's door. She soon answered Nick's summons, received message and money, and, judging from her nods and motions, promised him to go at once. The lad set off again in the direction of Porthlock; and within ten minutes more the old woman came out of her cottage carrying her basket. She locked the door behind her and set off over the headlands towards St Mirions.

I watched Mother Trethewy safely away. When she was a small speck in the distance, I went round to the rear of her cottage and looked about me for some easy entrance. There was a small window there, which I easily unfastened. In another minute I was inside the little living-room, looking round for a likely spot on the floor. I went into a tiny shed opening out of the house and found there a collection of ropes and pulleys. These were doubtless used for hauling goods out of the cave below. Two or three lanterns hung on the wall near, and these I found on inspection to be newly trimmed. I had brought one of my own with me, however, and with it a revolver, which I thought might prove equally useful.

A careful inspection of the floor showed me a mark on the stones close to the earth where a crowbar had been used. Mother Trethewy's crowbar still stood in its corner. I laid hold of it and inserted the point at the spot indicated. The flag came up easily enough, revealing a dark cavern underneath. Turning the light of my lantern over this, I saw a flight of steps, apparently cut out of the rock, leading downwards. The air came up through the cavity, cold and damp.

I was fairly in for it now, and I dropped through the hatchway and went cautiously down the steps. The lantern, strapped to my waist, threw its dim light on shiny, damp walls, through which the brine was oozing. I counted the steps until they numbered fifty-two. Then came a passage, the floor of which sloped away at a rather quick rate. This, too, had been excavated through a soft bed of rock. It continued for nearly twenty yards, and then opened into a cave which I at once saw to be of natural formation. Standing in the middle of this, I tried in

vain to get an idea of its height. It towered above my head so much that I could not see the roof. The floor at my feet, however, seemed trodden into a path, and following this, I came to another passage, some fifteen yards in length, which finally emerged in a second cave, evidently of greater extent than the first. As I stepped into this, the faint booming of the sea met my ears. It was into this cave, then, that the entrance from the beach must lead.

I freshened the wick of my lantern and began to examine the cave carefully. I had been right in my conjecture—the Nanjulians' stores were accumulated here. The nooks and crannies were packed with them. Casks, bales, tubs, boxes, were piled one on another, carefully assorted and arranged. One corner sent forth a smell of spirits, another of tobacco. There must have been many a boat-load in that cave. Here and there I found goods literally rotting with old age and mould. Bales of foreign goods, silks, cloths, the contents green with mould, lay thrown about in prodigal confusion. I noticed, however, that in the dryer part of the cave, where the spirits and tobacco were stowed, there had been good care taken to preserve the stock.

Round and round and in and about that cave I went for nearly an hour examining and calculating. There would be a rich haul for us when we made the seizure. I should certainly get promoted and rewarded too. I began to build castles in the air. I would marry Bertha Penruddock, and live in a little house which I had taken a great fancy for. We—

'Stand!' cried a voice, so close to me that I felt the man's hot breath on my cheek. I paused on the instant, and looking through the gloom, saw right before me the evil face of Pharaoh Nanjulian. He stood immediately opposite me, not two yards away, his right hand raised, and pointing a revolver full at my head. There was murder in his eyes; and a great wave came up in my heart as I realised how entirely I was at his mercy.

'If so be as you move a finger, co's'guard, I fire,' said Pharaoh Nanjulian. 'Move you back agin that wall.'

I obeyed, hardly knowing what I did. He followed me, keeping the pistol upon me, until he could touch me. 'Give me the lantern.' He took it out of my hand, and set it on the floor at his side, never turning eye or hand as he did so. The barrel of the pistol looked straight into my face, and the hand that held it never trembled or flinched.

'Now,' said Pharaoh, 'I'll make so bold as to tell 'ee, Master Walsh, what I think. You're acquainted with our little hiding-place, it seems. But wun't go out of un; no, not unless I like. What say 'ee to a bargain, co's'guard? Do you promise faithful to gi' up courtin' my girl and not to say nothing about the cave, and you shall have your life? Don't waste no time in thinking 'bout it, co's'guard. If you say "No," then I shoots, and your brains goes spatter agin the rock.'

Staring straight beyond him, my eyes saw a strange sight. A face, white, startled, full of excitement, came out of the gloom—the face of the boy, Nick Perran. He stole softly up behind Pharaoh Nanjulian, his naked feet making no

sound on the dry sand. His eyes stared straight at Pharaoh's head; his hands clutched Mother Trethewy's crowbar. He swung it up noiselessly for the blow—one, two, three—

'Don't waste no time, co's'guard,' said Pharaoh.

Crash! Bang! The great crowbar came down, and at the same instant the pistol exploded with a voice that woke a thousand horrible echoes. The bullet whizzed past my ear and flattened itself against the rock behind.

'Ah! ah! ah!' screamed Nick Perran, almost frantic in his excitement. 'Quick, Master Walsh, and bind him up. Quick, before he comes to his senses.'

But there was small fear of Pharaoh Nanjulian coming to his senses just then. The crowbar had knocked all his wits out of him. Nevertheless, we secured his hands and feet, and having made his head comfortable, hastened out of the cave as fast as possible. On the way to Porthlock, Nick told me how he chanced to come up at the nick of time. Going along the headlands close to the town, he met Pharaoh, and seeing that he was making for the cottage, followed him at a safe distance. Looking in at the window, he saw Pharaoh descend into the cave. Then Nick saw possible danger for me, and made after the smuggler.

Well, I got a big force together that day and made a seizure, Pharaoh Nanjulian included. The other Nanjulians got wind of what had happened as they came in at night, and made off, nor were they seen at Porthlock again for many a day. I got my promotion, and married Bertha; and we both attributed our great happiness, first, to the camera-obscura, from which I got the important clue; and second, to Nick Perran, who saved my life.

SENTRY-GO!

THE foregoing is the cry that authoritatively rings out every two hours from the sentry's post on all military guards, informing the occupants of the guardroom and vicinity in general, and the next man for sentry in particular, that the hour has arrived for relieving sentries.

Military guards are of twenty-four hours' duration, the men mounting guard at ten A.M., and remaining on till relieved at the same hour on the next day. Guards relieve each other thus: on the approach of the new guard, the sentry outside the guardroom door calls, 'Guard, turn out!' at which summons the old guard hurry out and fall in, with shouldered arms. The new guard is formed up facing them, and compliments are exchanged by the guards presenting arms to each other. The new guard is then numbered and told off by its commander, three men being allowed for each post of sentry duty, and numbered one, two, and three, in which order they are taken for duty. This allows each man four hours between every two hours on sentry.

When all the sentries are changed, and the guard premises duly handed over to the new commander, the old guard march away to their quarters, receiving the parting compliment of a 'present' from their comrades in arms; and the latter are then dismissed to the guardroom. When off sentry, the men sit about in the guard-

house—or outside, if the weather be fine—smoking, reading, or spinning yarns to each other.

During the time they are on duty, guards are visited by officers of different standing, termed 'Grand rounds' and 'Visiting rounds.' The latter is a duty performed by a regimental officer, whose instructions are, to visit the barrack guard once by day and once by night. At his approach, the sentry turns the guard out, and the men stand with shouldered arms for inspection, the commander of the guard reporting if correct or otherwise, after which the men are dismissed. The officer also examines the sentries, to see if they are well informed as to the orders of their posts.

'Grand rounds' is a duty performed by field-officers, taken in turn from the majors and lieutenant-colonels of the garrison. A little more ceremony appertains to these visits, the guard presenting arms on the approach of the officer. At night, there is usually a countersign, which has to be correctly given before the officer is permitted to approach the guard; and ludicrous scenes occur sometimes in consequence of the visiting officer having allowed the countersign to slip his memory.

On some guards—at large convict establishments, for example—the orders for sentries in reference to the countersign are very strict. They are to allow no one to come within a certain distance, unless the countersign is given up; and if it cannot be elicited who the wanderer may be, the guard is to be at once alarmed. On these duties, each sentry is furnished with ball-ammunition, in case of emergency. There is a chain of sentries around such buildings as convict prisons, magazines, &c., and during the night the word is passed from one to the other, in a loud voice, 'Twelve o'clock, and all's well;' and so on at the expiration of every hour.

All sentries challenge persons approaching their posts after ten P.M., the ordinary form, when there is no countersign, being, 'Halt! who comes there?' to which the individual challenged replies, or should reply, 'Friend.' The sentry then says, 'Pass, friend;' and when he sees that everything is correct, 'All's well.'

Certain compliments have to be paid by guards and sentries, in accordance with regulation. When any officer below the rank of major—or the corresponding rank in the navy—passes his post, the sentry stands at 'attention,' with shouldered arms; to majors and officers of higher rank, he will present arms. To the officer commanding a regiment or detachment, the barrack guard is turned out once a day, and all guards turn out to general officers in uniform. On the approach of an armed party, the sentry turns out the guard, who stand at the 'present' if it is a battalion of infantry or similar body of troops; with shouldered arms to companies and other small parties.

To all members of the royal family, arms are presented, much amusement and wonder often being caused to the uninitiated by the sight of a sentry performing some mystic evolution of his rifle to a child in a perambulator or go-cart.

Officers of any recognised foreign service are paid the compliments prescribed for those of the British services. No compliments are paid after 'retreat' has sounded—at sunset—except that the guard turns out to armed parties and to visiting officers.

Prisoners are confined in guardrooms when drunk or riotous, awaiting trial, &c., the commander of the guard and the sentry on the guardroom door being responsible for their safe custody. In the event of a prisoner making his escape, the non-commissioned officer and men responsible are tried by court-martial, and severely punished for the neglect of duty.

In addition to the greatcoat and cape which are issued to every soldier, and invariably taken on guard, 'watchcoats' are provided for the use of sentries during the cold season. The sentry-box is for the shelter of the sentry during inclement weather, but often proves a poor protection in a violent storm, especially if it be beating in the direction of the opening. In thunder-storms, sentries may remove their bayonets, or other parts of their arms and equipment likely to attract the lightning.

To sleep on his post is a serious offence for a sentry, and when men are detected in this irregularity, they are usually severely punished.

Guard-mounting parade is the strictest inspection parade of the day. The dress worn is generally 'marching-order;' and the guards are inspected by the adjutant and sergeant-major, who minutely examine every detail of the clothing and equipment of the men going on guard.

Guard-duty is done in turn, by a roster—that is, a military register—throughout each regiment, and, to encourage cleanliness, it is customary in many corps to detail one man more than is required. When the inspection is taking place, the adjutant notices the man whose general turn-out is the cleanest, and this man does not go on guard, but returns to his quarters, gets rid of his rifle and equipment, and is employed at one of the regimental offices as an orderly, till guard-mounting hour on the following day. Instead of patrolling a sentry's post, he gets his 'night-in-bed,' and a guard is marked to him as though he had actually performed it. Tommy Atkins terms this 'getting the stick,' as the orderlies are equipped with a stick or cane in place of a rifle.

On the day of dismounting guard, the men perform no further parade or duty, finding for a few hours plenty of occupation in thoroughly cleaning straps and accoutrements, especially if they have been favoured with wet weather.

PEACE.

THE wandering winds are silent on the sea,
That sleeps in sunlight, smiling in its sleep :
No wavelet stirs the bosom of the Deep :
No cloudlet mars the blue immensity ;
And yet anon the storm will hither haste,
And lash to wrath with mighty arm the main,
And dash the azure black with wintry rain,
And wildly rave across the watery waste.
There is no staying peace in outward things,
Yet through them ever moves the moulding Will,
From silence into silence touching still
The lyre of Nature with its twanging strings.
Thou art a part of the eternal whole ;
Live thou true life in restfulness of soul.

J. J. HALDANE BURGESS.

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IN WILD SPAIN.

THE epithet in the above title bears no reflection upon human nature in the Iberian Peninsula, but refers solely to the uncultivated as distinct from the cultivated portions of its territory—what Shakespeare calls the 'high wild hills and rough uneven ways.' The joint authors of the book which suggests this paper (*Wild Spain*, by Messrs Chapman and Buck. London: Gurney and Jackson) have for more than twenty years undertaken numerous sporting expeditions into various parts of Spain—chiefly in Andalucia. They are naturalists as well as sportsmen; and the long experience they have had of España Agreste gives that touch of verisimilitude to their word-pictures which nothing but long and skilful personal observation can secure.

It is not every one who could afford to follow after wild sport in Spain, as Messrs Chapman and Buck have done. It requires so much that only a comparatively few people have; especially a long purse, and almost unlimited leisure. To visit Andalucia, for instance, for purposes of sport, horses are required, as in the wild land of that district there are no roads, no rails, no bridges, and riding is the sportsman's only available means of locomotion. The occasional village inn is his only place of shelter, and these are sometimes few and far between. A ride through the wilder regions, we are told, and especially among the sierras, involves an amount of forethought and provision that are well-nigh incredible. 'In the open country no one lives, and nothing can be obtained; or, at least, it is unsafe to rely on it for anything. Thus one is obliged to carry from the town all the necessaries of life. . . . First there is provend for the beasts; heavy sacks of grain, straw, &c., necessitating mules to carry them, and this, in turn, nearly doubling the quantity. Thus an expedition of a fortnight or so signifies nothing less than the transport of huge mule-loads of impedimenta, the most bulky of which are for the use of the beasts themselves; though the indispensables for

the riders are considerable—bread, meat, eggs and oranges, skins of wine, and, in most cases, tents with all the paraphernalia of camp-outfit, cooking apparatus, and the rest.'

All this of course means the employment of a small army of attendants, mule-drivers, and the like. And even then, progress is sometimes slow and not very certain; the pocket compass, or instinct, or a doubtful guide, being in general the only means of finding one's way to where sport is expected. And seldom, moreover, does a ride through the wilder portions of Spain pass without incident. Thus, once our two sportsmen were carried off as prisoners by the Civil Guard, and taken forty miles for the purpose of identification. Sometimes, also, they have to do with the fraternity who live by robbery and spoliation. At another time it may be a wild bull that disputes the way, when a well-directed bullet or two generally ends the strife; or, as a warning of what may be in store for himself, the sportsman may come upon the body of a murdered man. 'On all the by-ways of Spain, and along the bridle-paths of the sierras, one sees little memorial tablets or rude wooden crosses, bearing silent witness to such deeds of violence.' All this, however, is not without its humorous side, for our two sportsmen and their long cavalcade were occasionally themselves taken to be a gang of brigands, their sudden appearance striking dire dismay in the breasts of peaceful peasants and muleteers; and on two occasions, again, on entering villages, they were hailed as a strolling company of acrobats. "Here come the mountebanks!" sung out the ragged urchins of the plaza, as our cavalcade with its tent-poles, camp-gear, and, to them, foreign-looking baggage, filed up the narrow street.'

But towns and even villages are seldom met with in the sierras, and scattered cottages hardly ever. The herdsmen and other peasantry gather together, as a rule, into villages, as it would not be regarded safe to have their houses in lonely and distant places, as our shepherds have in this country. Many of the poorer classes, however,

live by charcoal burning, and the blue smoke curling upwards is always to the traveller a sure landmark of human existence. These have perforce to live in the woods; as also do those who are in charge of the herds of cattle which are pastured in the more distant forests; their poor huts consisting of walls of undressed stones, thatched with reeds. 'By day and night the herdsman guards his cattle or goats, often having to sleep on the hill, or under the scant shelter of a lentisco, for which he receives about eightpence a day, with an allowance of bread, oil, salt, and vinegar. His wife and children of course share his lonely lot, their only touch with the outer world being a chance visit, once or twice a year, to their native village.'

To sportsmen or naturalists out all day among the dry scrubby wastes of the sierras, one pleasant hour to them is their arrival in the evening at some posada, or village inn, where, after supper, comes the song and the dance, and all the gaiety so characteristic of the Spanish peasant. Here is a pretty little episode. Our two sportsmen had been living above the snow-line of the mountains, for ten days, hunting the ibex, and had returned at length to the comparative comforts of the posada. Supper over: 'Now all we need is a song from the Murillo-faced little girl who is fanning the charcoal embers. "Sing us a couplet, Dolores, to welcome us back from the snows of Alpujarras!"'

'Dolores: With the greatest pleasure, Caballero, if José will play the guitar. No one plays like José, but he is tired, having travelled all day with his mules from Lanjaron.'

'José: No, señor, not tired, but I have no soul to-night to play. This morning they asked me to bring medicine from the town for Carmen; but when I reached the house she was dead. I find myself very sad.'

'Dolores: But as she already has her palm and her crown?'

'José: That is true! Bring the guitar, and I will see if it will quit me of this melancholy.'

We pass over boar-hunting and trouting, as not conveying much that is either striking or new; as also the shooting of the Great Bustard, by driving or stalking. But the manner in which, in winter, the peasantry capture the Great Bustard for food, though not sportsman-like, is picturesque. Two men are required, one of whom carries a gun, the other a *cencerro*, or cattle-bell, and a dark-lantern. 'The pack of bustards will be carefully watched during the afternoon, and not lost sight of when night comes until their sleeping-quarters are ascertained. When quite dark, the tinkling of the *cencerro* will be heard, and a ray of light will surround the devoted bustards, charming or frightening them—whichever it may be—into still-life. As the familiar sound of the cattle-bell becomes louder and nearer, the ray of light brighter and brighter, and the surrounding darkness more intense, the bustards are too charmed, or too dazed, to fly. Then comes the report, and a charge of heavy shot works havoc among them. As bands of bustards are numerous, this poaching plan might be carried out night after night; but, luckily, the bustards will not stand the same experience twice. On a second attempt being made, they are off as soon as they see the light approaching.'

These bustards are very large and heavy birds, three of them, which on one occasion fell to the gun of one of our sportsmen, weighing together ninety-three pounds.

To naturalists, even more than to sportsmen, the chapters descriptive of the animal life of the marisma, and of the wonderful swamps which compose that immense marshland, will appeal strongly. The marisma is the name given to the great level delta of the Guadalquivir, covering some hundreds of square miles. This huge triangular area is described as, in fact, a wilderness, the greater part of which in winter is a dismal waste of waters. 'For league after league, as one advances into that forbidding desolation, the eye rests on nothing but water—tawny waters meeting the sky all round the horizon.' The marisma is intersected by the Guadalquivir and its various branches and channels. In winter these marshy plains are the haunts of abundant wild-fowl—ducks, geese, and water-birds of various kinds; but it is the spring months that are of most interest to the naturalist. 'Imagination can hardly picture, nor Nature provide, a region more congenial to the tastes of wild aquatic birds than these huge savannahs, cane-brake and stagnant waters, and their profusion of plant and insect-life. Here, in spring, is an ornithological Eden.'

'One cannot go far into the marisma without seeing that extraordinary fowl the Flamingo, certainly the most characteristic denizen of the wilderness. In herds of three to five hundred, several of which herds are often in sight at once, they stand like regiments, feeding in the open water, all heads under, greedily tearing up the grasses and water-plants that grow beneath the surface. On approaching them, which can only be done with extreme caution, their silence is first broken by the sentries, which commence walking away with low croaks; then the whole five hundred necks rise at once to full stretch, every bird gagging his loudest as they walk obliquely away, looking back over their shoulders as though to take stock of the extent of the danger. Shoving the punt a few yards forward, up they all rise, and a more beautiful sight cannot be imagined than the simultaneous spreading of their thousand crimson wings, flashing against the sky like a gleam of rosy light. Then one descends to the practical, and a volley of slugs cuts a line through their phalanx.' Some of these beautiful birds, with their very long legs and long necks, stand as high as six and a half and seven feet.

Equally graphic and interesting are the descriptions we have of other birds that haunt the marisma, the lake and lagoon—Avocets and Stilts, Storks and Herons, Egrets and Spoonbills, and scores of others—but these we must pass over. One very remarkable fact, however, and one we should think very little known, is, that there are actually a herd of wild Camels existing in the marisma. The statement that there are wild camels in Europe does at first hearing sound strange; but such is the fact, and this is how it came about, as is explained in a book published at Seville in 1869:

About the year 1830, a number of camels were brought to the south of Spain from the Canary Islands, and in a few years increased to a herd

of about eighty. In 1833 they were used as beasts of burden and transport in the province of Cadiz, employed in the carriage of materials used in making the high-road from Port St Mary to San Lucar de Barrameda, and also in conveyances to Arcos, Jerez, Chichlana, and other towns. But horses were frightened at the strange animals, and could on no account be got to work with them; and so the camels fell into disuse as beasts of burden and carriage. They were then tried in agricultural work, but with no better success. The result, in short, was that they were allowed to occupy the marisma, and have wandered there for nearly a quarter of a century. It is difficult, however, getting nearer to them on these level marshes than within a mile or so, as they are extremely wild and shy, and fly off at the first suspicion of the approach of a human being.

When first Mr Chapman, about nine years ago, announced through the press his having seen these wild camels, it was in some quarters promptly questioned. But time has proved the fact. And our two sportsmen have fallen in with them on several subsequent occasions. On January 6th, 1888, they descried a herd of nineteen, of various sizes, all dreamily ruminating, knee-deep in the marisma, each form reflected in the still water beneath. The herd remained for half an hour in sight, and by the help of field-glasses were brought very close and well seen. 'Presently they moved on to a rushy islet, some three miles from shore; hard by stood a rosy troop of flamingoes, and the intervening waters were dotted with numberless fleets of ducks and geese. It was a unique spectacle, one that could hardly be matched outside this out-of-the-world corner of Europe.'

With regard to another animal closely associated with Spain—namely, the Bull—we have here also some characteristically fresh information. Most people in this country no doubt will fancy that any sort of bull is good enough to put in the arena, to be teased into rage, and then killed. This, however, is not so. The bulls used for fighting purposes are a specially selected and specially cared-for class. They are all pedigreed. Andalusia is especially the district of the bull. Here, at the age of one year, the young bulls are separated from the heifers, branded with the owner's mark, and turned out loose on the plains to graze with others of their own age and sex. When a year older, the young bulls are gathered together, in order that their mettle and fighting qualities may be tested. One of them is separated from the herd, and chased by a man on horseback, who, by the skilful use of a blunted lance, overthrows the escaping bull, whereupon another rider comes in front of the animal with a sharper lance, to withstand the expected attack. If the bull on regaining its feet attacks the rider twice, it is passed as a fighting animal; but if it turns tail and runs off, then it is set aside to be killed, or to be used in agricultural work. And so with each animal until the whole herd of two-year-olds have been tested. Each bull that has stood the test successfully is then entered in the herd-book, with a description of its appearance, and receives a name—such as *Espartero*, *Hamenco*, and the like. This process of careful selection goes on from year to

year till the bull is five years old, when, should its mettle still prove true, it is ready for the arena, and flaming posters appear on the walls of Madrid or Seville announcing that *Espartero* (or whatever its name is) will on such and such a date make its first and final appearance. A good 'warrantable' five-year-old bull for the fighting ring costs from seventy to eighty pounds sterling.

This book is a specially attractive one, and it would be easy to dwell much longer over its pages. The stories of the haunts and habits of eagles and vultures, of the lammergeyer, of the ibex, the lynx, the wild-cat, the red deer—all these are tempting; but we can only commend the reader curious on these subjects to survey the pages for himself.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER IX.

When to the sessions of sweet, silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste.

SHAKESPEARE.

CHRISTMAS Eve, with nature trying its hardest to chill and discourage the cheerfulness and good feeling that, even in these cynical days, bubble up in the very midst of poverty and sickness and want of employment. A frosty fog brooded over London, through which the gas lamps winked dejectedly at mid-day without doing anything but make the darkness surrounding them more apparent.

In Dr Merridew's house the Egyptian darkness that could be felt would not have checked the Christmas rejoicings and preparations. There is such a lot to be done on Christmas Eve: such doing-up of parcels, such directing of Christmas cards, such dashing out into the fog to get sealing-wax or string or a card for some one forgotten in the first reckoning; such elaborate decorations of the shabby, little dining-room with lop-sided wreaths and garlands, that came floundering down if the door were shut forcibly, which occurred once in ten minutes.

It was also necessary to make constant visits of inspection into the kitchen, where a goose, which had arrived from Scar the day before, was being picked and prepared for next day's dinner. Such a splendid goose, too, which the children tried hard to identify with one of the stately fleet on the pond at the farm, who, when they happened to be on land, filled Kitty's soul with fear, as she passed, with their long necks and loud hissing.

It had come in a big basket, with apples and a jar of cream and a couple of lobsters and some walnuts and a cake—just what a Christmas hamper should be, they all agreed.

Sage was not so demonstrative in her pleasure at its arrival. She was a little bit dull altogether that Christmas Eve; the boys more than once suspected her of being cross, only she was more open to what they considered reason than usual, and gave in to sudden demands for advances of pocket-money with an amiability that was above suspicion.

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Father pretended to suspect biliousness, and really watched her surreptitiously, as he had done a good many times since her return from Scar. Fathers are not generally very observant about daughters' feelings; but Dr Merridew was fidgeted by the feeling that there was a change in Sage which he could not account for. The two months at Scar seemed to have been all that was delightful—the whole party agreed in that; and Sage was up in arms if anything was said against the place. Dr Merridew, in that unreasonable way parents have, regarded Sage as still quite a little girl in respect to love affairs; but it did at last dawn on him that this might be a possible explanation of the change in her.

Could it be this artist fellow, of whom all the boys and Kitty were so full? He paid more attention than was usually his habit to the children's descriptions, but could not gather much information, so he tried to sound Kitty on the subject.

'Kit.'

'Yes, father.'

'What was that Mr What's-his-name like, down at Scar?'

'Who?'

'Why, the artist who painted you. Queer sort of artist he must have been to paint my ugly duck!—Now, Kitty, if you behave so disrespectfully to your paternal relative, I shall order a dose of Gregory's powder every night for a week.'

'If you mean Mr Ludlow,' Kitty said disdainfully, 'I can tell you that he is the greatest painter in England by far, and his picture will be the best in the Academy.'

'Number 269,' murmured Dr Merridew—'An ugly Duck.—Kitty, leave my whiskers alone.—Well? What was this Mr Ludlow like? Was he old?'

'Yes.'

'Very old?'

'Yes.'

'As old as me?'

'Nearly, I should say.'

'Thank you, Kitty. Was he as decrepit as your aged parent?'

'Oh no; of course he was not so very old as that, only pretty oldish.'

'Was he good-looking?'

'Oh no; he had gray hair.'

'Bald?'

'No.'

'Stout?'

'No. Oh, I don't know what he was like exactly—just like most oldish people. You know what I mean.'

'Did Sage like him?'

'Oh yes; awfully.'

'Did he like her?'

'Oh, I suppose so; he liked us all.—But I'll tell you who *did* like Sage awfully.' Kitty's voice sank to a mysterious whisper, and Dr Merridew pricked up his ears, thinking, 'Oho! now we're coming to it.'

'And who was that?'

Kitty held father's head firmly with her two hands, and put her lips close to his ear, breathing into it with the usual tickling sensation, 'Maurice Moore.'

'Oh-h-h!' a long whistle of disappointment

from Dr Merridew. 'Is that all? Why, he was the one-eyed man who took you out lobster-catching.' Which shows the chaotic effect produced by the very partial attention Dr Merridew bestowed on the children's narrations.

'Father!'—reproachfully—'I've told you hundreds of times that was Lot. And he wasn't one-eyed either, only one eye was always rather screwed up.'

But just then the surgery bell rang, and Dr Merridew never got any further, being left with the prevailing idea that this Maurice Moore, who liked Sage awfully, was one of the Scar fishermen, even though he might not be the one-eyed lobster catcher.

'I am not ungrateful,' Sage was telling herself; 'I don't mean to be ungrateful; but I don't think Christmas is merry after one is grown up. Of course, one can be happy and quite contented and grateful, but not merry. I don't think one need feel one is wicked because one can't be merry.'

And then she watched with wonder—and perhaps a very slight mixture of contempt was in the wonder, but very little, for she loved and honoured him, and made a hero of him still—father romping with Kitty as if he had not known years of trouble and wearing anxiety, and had not buried his love years ago.

She had painted a little Christmas card to send to Mr Ludlow, taken from a small sketch of hers of Scar Head with a sunset sky behind it; and when it was done, something she had meant for a bush thrown up against the orange sky, took so curious a likeness to a human figure coming, as some one had seemed to come one September evening, straight out of the sunset, that she could not bring herself to part with it, partly on her own account, and partly because she feared that Mr Ludlow might see the resemblance, and remember that evening.

She went up now and then, when the merriness of Christmas became too oppressive, to have a look at the little picture, which she had put inside the cover of her Bible. She was afraid Owen Ludlow might think it unkind of his friend to send no greeting to him at Christmas. Kitty and the boys, with much discussion and consideration, had chosen cards which they considered appropriate for the painter; but Sage could not make up her mind to send him anything but the sketch of Scar Head, and that she could not bring herself to part with, even though by so doing she might appear neglectful of her friend.

Ludlow had written to her several times; and Dr Merridew, with his suspicions not quite allayed by Kitty's assurances of the age and uninterestingness of the painter, had read the letters with interest and a little wonder. Not being himself a man who could make a friend of a girl, and having a constant tendency to depreciate his own belongings, he found it hard to believe that his little girl, Sage, could inspire such a dignified emotion as friendship.

Sage had answered the letter; but I do not think quite so satisfactorily as she might have done but for that final fortnight at Scar. I do not fancy friendship and love can reign side by side in one heart unless it be a very large one.

Dr Merridew was late in coming in to supper

that Christmas Eve; and as the usual hours of going to bed were set aside to-night, the children were all waiting for him with much impatience. I firmly believe that Kitty had gone to sleep on the hearthrug with her head resting against Sage's knee, or else why should the goose prepared for to-morrow's dinner have suddenly joined the party by the fire and spread out a webbed foot to the blaze; but it was prevented from further demonstrations by unmistakable sounds of Dr Merridew's return, and discreetly retired to its place in the larder, while Kitty jumped up, tossing the hair out of her eyes, and forgetting all about the strange incident that had just occurred.

'Here he is! Hooray!'

'Tell Sarah to hurry up the pie.'

'Don't let him go up to wash his hands, Kitty. Make him come straight in. Hands always are dirty at Christmas. Just look at mine, they're beastly; but'—

A silence of consternation fell on the family, for further delay seemed impending. A hansom rattled up to the door, and pulled up noisily at the curb; and they heard the doors flung open and a man's voice talking to Dr Merridew on the doorstep. Cabs were not frequent at the doctor's door, and when they came, they invariably meant a patient in a desperate hurry who had sent to fetch the doctor.

'It really is too bad,' they all agreed; and then they gave a sigh of relief, for they heard father's latchkey in the door, and the cab drive off; so they knew that Dr Merridew had not been carried off from his anxious and hungry family and from that much-enduring steak pie.

Kitty was starting to meet him, and prevent any unnecessary ablutions, when voices in the passage made her pause again.

'There's some one come in with him, and they'll go into the surgery and stop hours and hours!'

But again they were wrong in their dark forebodings, for Dr Merridew did not pass on to the surgery, but stopped at the dining-room door; and, as he turned the handle, they heard him say, 'Come in, come in; you'll find all the youngsters here.' And then the door opened, and father came in, ushering in Owen Ludlow.

CHAPTER X.

Why else was the pause prolonged, but that singing might issue thence?

Why rushed the discords in, but that harmony should be prized?

BROWNING.

'You see,' Mr Ludlow said, with a helping of the steak pie before him, 'my old friend Collins—you know who I mean?—the man I was with so long out in California—has gone off for the winter to Italy. He wanted me to go with him; but I've grown old and lazy, and not to be roused up to go a-gadding even to Italy. So, when he found I wouldn't come, he said I could have the use of his house while he was away, free, gratis, for nothing, a jolly little house up in Regent's Park, with a studio fit for a king. I didn't think much of his offer at first; but a day or two ago it dawned on my mind that it would be pleasant to come up and see my friends for a bit at Christmas.'

'Very pleased to see you,' Dr Merridew said. 'I've had it on my mind ever since the children came home, that I've never thanked you for your kindness to them at Scar.'

'Oh, I assure you it was no kindness on my part.—We had a jolly good time, didn't we, boys? and Sage and Kitty were the most long-suffering of models. You know that I painted them into my picture, didn't you, sir? You must come and have a look at them and my Pomona. Yes; I brought her up with me, and endured mental torments all the way, from the conviction that she was ruined and done for through the outrageous violence of the porters. But there was not a scratch or a rub on her when I unpacked her; indeed, I think she had improved during the two days she was shut away from my sight. You must give me your opinion of her. I've got her in exactly right light. She won't look half so well in the Academy.'

Dr Merridew and Mr Ludlow got on famously, much to Sage's relief. Sage herself was very quiet, and the painter fancied she was a little pale, and that there were some patient lines about her mouth that were not there when he painted her at Scar. The beauty that had flashed out so untimely when Maurice was present had died away again, he noticed; but he had never cared for it or dwelt on it with satisfaction, and he was glad to find his quiet, little friend again with her only charm, the soft, sympathetic eyes, that seemed so transparent you could almost see the pure young soul within.

Before Mr Ludlow went, he made Sage and the children promise to come up and see him to-morrow, or rather to-day, for it was Christmas morning by that time. He wanted them to come and dine; but when he heard of the Scar goose, he understood the impossibility of such a proceeding; and so it was arranged that he should come and have a share of that wonderful bird, and afterwards conduct the whole party up to Regent's Park to spend the rest of the day.

This being settled, Ludlow took his departure, and the children went up to bed, and Sage sat down with her father in the little sitting-room.

The appearance of the painter had rather shaken Dr Merridew's faith in Sage's feelings of friendship. Owen Ludlow was a decidedly younger-looking man than the one Dr Merridew saw in the glass when he shaved; but then he had not had the cares of a family and a very uphill practice to take the youthfulness out of him. It was difficult to realise that to Kitty's eyes Owen Ludlow looked an old man, and even to Sage decidedly middle-aged; and though women are generally supposed to be more impressed by dress than men, Dr Merridew was much more carried away by Mr Ludlow's splendid fur-lined coat than either Sage or Kitty.

But his doubts were reassured by Sage's undisguised pleasure and entire want of embarrassment; and also he noticed that even when Mr Ludlow was present, and the children were chattering, and Owen taking his full share in the fun and nonsense, Sage still had that plaintive, little, far-away look, as if her thoughts were not always occupied with what was going on before her.

'It must be the one-eyed man who caught

lobsters, after all,' was the only conclusion Dr Merridew could arrive at.

Next day was all that Christmas Day should be—frosty and bright, without any of the fog that in these degenerate days so often accompanies frost. The goose for dinner began to emit savoury odours at an abnormally early hour, and yet was only just done to a turn when dinner-time came, and Owen Ludlow with it.

He had brought a present for Dr Merridew; but he said the others must wait for theirs till after Christmas, as he had not had time to get them; and he was not sure what they would like; so they must come out with him one day and choose for themselves.

'But I have something for you at home, Sage,' he said, with a strange look at her, which made the blood rush up into her pale, little face, and her heart flutter in an odd, tiresome way.

'No; I'm not going to say what it is,' he said in answer to Kitty's whispered inquiry as to whether it was a picture; and Sage felt sure it was one of the many sketches of Maurice Moore that lay about in the studio at Sear—Maurice in all sorts of easy, out-of-the-way, graceful attitudes. She resolved instantaneously in what place of honour it should hang, where she could see it from her bed, where the morning sun would fall full on it, over the chest of drawers, on the top of which were her few books and treasured little nicknacks. How good of Mr Ludlow to think of giving her that, and how strange that it should have occurred to him when, of course, he could not have the least idea that it was the one thing in the world she would value most!

His present to Dr Merridew was that picture of Kitty of which mention has been made, sitting on the boat with a group of the men on the shingle below; and it was 'framed beautiful,' the servants said, when they were brought in to look at it, evidently considering the frame the principal part of it.

Dr Merridew was very much pleased with it, and so was Kitty, who had always rather resented the fact that a photograph of Sage was the only picture in his room; and a very ugly photograph, too, with very staring eyes and large hands and hair done in a pigtail.

The goose, they all agreed, was perfection; and so was the plum-pudding; and though an ominous little tinkle from the surgery bell caused anger and consternation to appear on most of the countenances round the table, it turned out to be only a young woman with the toothache, which was dealt with summarily; and Dr Merridew came back, with a whiff of creosote hanging about him, to finish his pudding.

And then, without paying half the usual and proper attention to the oranges and chestnuts which usually occupied all Christmas afternoon till the tea-tray appeared, Owen Ludlow carried them off, one and all, for the rest of the day to Regent's Park. I am ashamed to say I do not know what is the best way from Dalston to Regent's Park; but my better-informed reader will be sure to know, and will be able to trace the party by omnibus, train, or underground railway, as they wended their way to Mr Ludlow's quarters.

Christmas daylight is short; and by the time they reached Regent's Park, darkness had come,

with great frosty stars up above, and twinkling rows of gas-lights below.

'Here we are!' said the painter, as they stopped at a gate leading into a garden surrounding a detached white house. The hall was lighted by a hanging lantern brought from Damascus, of softly tinted glass; and at the foot of the staircase was waiting a kindly old housekeeper to show the two girls up-stairs to take off their hats. There were such lovely thick carpets on the broad shallow stairs that Kitty could not resist treading it as a cat does in moments of great content with a movement of the paws as if she were kneading.

Kitty was impatient to join the rest of the party down-stairs, being afraid that father would be shown the picture of Pomona without her being there to point out the chief points of interest; so she left Sage, who was more leisurely in her movements, and ran down without her; and when Sage was ready, she found that the attendant housekeeper had also disappeared, and she must find her way down by herself. From the hall a passage led off to what she concluded was the studio; but on either side were other doors, and one of these stood a little open, and showed a light within; and Sage, with a sudden hope that perhaps her picture might be there, and that she might get a sight of it without others standing by, went in.

Some one was standing by the fire, and, seeing this, Sage would have withdrawn, had not that some one turned with an exclamation of great pleasure, and come towards her with both hands outstretched in eager welcome.

He had held her hand last in the moonlight on Sear Cliff. It was Maurice Moore.

(To be continued.)

THE SILVER QUESTION.

A SPECIAL session of the Congress of the United States has been summoned to consider a subject which is agitating all the civilised nations of the world, and which is generally called the Silver Question. With the deliberations and contentions of the American legislature we shall not concern ourselves here; but we propose to explain briefly, and as simply as the complexities of the matter will allow, how it is that the Silver Question has reached a crisis in the great Western Republic, and has produced a continuous crop of commercial disasters, almost unprecedented in number and extent, in the course of the present year.

In former articles,* we have explained the theory of Bimetallism and the origin and meaning of the Pound Sterling, and we will assume our readers, therefore, to be in possession of the elementary facts. The agitation for Bimetallism, it may be recalled, arose chiefly in consequence of Germany having demonetised silver, after the close of the Franco-German war, and of the United States having resumed specie payments in 1879.

We must, however, go back to the year 1878 in order to trace the economic development of the

* 'What is Bimetallism?' April 17, 1886. 'The Pound Sterling,' December 10, 1887.

question. The silver dollar was restored by an Act of Congress of that year, now commonly referred to as the Bland Act, taking its name from the introducer of the Bill. The silver dollar had been the usual currency before the civil war; but the exigencies of that period of storm and stress required the creation of a vast paper currency—greenbacks—which it was the object of the Bland Act to replace by metal. This Act provided that the Government should purchase every month not less than two million dollars' worth (£400,000), and not more than four million dollars' worth (£800,000) of silver bullion, to be coined into dollars.

Now, while this Act compelled the purchase of at least £400,000 worth of silver per month, it did not as is commonly supposed, involve the issue of silver dollars to the same amount. The price of silver varies, and the amount of bullion purchasable for two million dollars was not always the same. Thus, at the time the Bland Act was passed, a paper dollar or greenback (then inconvertible), was not worth its face-value in gold; and therefore the amount of silver purchasable by greenbacks depended both on the gold-price of silver bullion, and on the gold-value of the paper. But when specie payments were resumed at the beginning of 1879, then the Government greenbacks, being redeemable in gold, became the measure of gold-values, and could be used to purchase the silver at the current price of that metal in gold.

Did all the silver coin go into circulation month by month? There was just the difficulty. The Act provided for the issue of silver-certificates against a deposit of silver dollars—in amounts of ten dollars and upwards—and in practice these certificates were found much more convenient than the coins. They were not, like the old greenbacks and the silver dollar itself, absolute legal tender; but as they were receivable in payment of taxes, of customs duties, and of all public dues, they circulated freely. These certificates and the coined dollars formed the silver currency of the Bland Act.

The passing of the Bland Act was in part the result of the commercial depression which followed upon the inflation of 1871-73—in which the low prices were ascribed to the contracted currency—and in part the result of the efforts of the Silver States to find a larger outlet for the product of their mines. It did not establish Bimetallism, and it was a compromise intended to appease all parties, but which ended in satisfying none. It was a novel experiment in economics—to introduce a regular monthly addition to the currency without regard to the quantity of coins already in circulation, or the need of the community for more—and it endured for twelve years, with curious results.

In the first place, the banks did not care for the new silver money, and would not allow it to accumulate in their vaults, for gold

remained, as ever, the basis of credit and of foreign trade. For several years they prohibited the settlement of balances at the Clearing House in New York, and in some other cities, either in silver certificates or in silver dollars. They were obliged, of course, to receive the silver currency when tendered on deposit, or in payment of debts; but they paid it out again as quickly as possible, and turned over both dollars and certificates to the Treasury through brokers and others who had heavy payments to make to the Custom-house and other public departments.

Thus, as fast as the Government coined the silver, it came back again to the Treasury vaults—all but a small proportion retained in circulation for purposes of small change. Professor Taussig of Harvard, an acknowledged authority on American economics, thus describes the operation: 'The employees to whom the silver dollars are paid, get rid of them as fast as they make purchases: the shopkeepers in whose tills they accumulate, finding their customers averse from taking them in change, turn them into the banks on deposit, and the banks finally turn them into the nearest sub-treasury in payment of public dues. The round trip from Treasury back to Treasury is easily made, in some districts in the course of a single week. The degree of favour which they meet of course affects this movement, and varies in different parts of the country, apparently reflecting in a curious way the popular feeling as to the desirability of having silver currency at all. They circulate very little east of the Alleghanies, but are used more freely and permanently in the Mississippi Valley. Among the negroes of the South, big pieces are said to be favourites, and find a permanent lodgment. Their greatest circulation was reached in 1886.'

Coinage under the Bland Act began in March 1878, and practically not one-fifth of the coins went, and remained, among the people. Meanwhile, 'dead' silver was rapidly accumulating in the vaults. In 1880, however, the Treasury stimulated the circulation of certificates by offering to give, in exchange for gold deposited at New York, drafts on the Government offices in the South and West, payable in these certificates. It was an easy and cheap way of remitting for those who had to send money thither, and by the end of 1881 some sixty-two million dollars' worth of silver certificates were in circulation. The abundant crops of 1880-82, the demand for them from Europe, and the subsequent extension of railways, &c., greatly facilitated the operation by causing a greater demand for currency. Thus it was that, down to the end of 1883 or so, the silver trouble was not much felt in America.

With 1884, however, came a reaction, and many disastrous failures of large firms, banks, and railways. The railroad-building mania ceased, loans were called in, credit was shaken, and the circulation of the silver currency shrank rapidly. Once more 'dead' silver accumulated in the Treasury; and by the middle of 1886 some ninety-four millions of dollars were held in the vaults, with no use and no demand for it. As fast as silver was paid into the banks, on deposit

or in the ordinary way of business, it was turned over by them to the Treasury, in the same way as before.

A curious thing in connection with American currency now comes into view. Between 1880 and 1890 there was a considerable increase in the number of silver coins—not certificates—retained in the hands of the public, and yet there was no apparent increase in the circulation of them. How was this? Simply because a large part of the silver coinage is not used as money at all, but is melted down by the jewellers and others. The coined silver is, no doubt, a great deal dearer than bullion silver; but people who want only a small quantity of the metal at a time, in order to produce something the value of which will depend more on the workmanship than on the metal contained in the articles, find it more convenient to melt down the dollars than to buy silver bullion. It is estimated that between fifty and sixty millions of the silver dollars issued have been thus used up in the arts.

We must now pass more rapidly on to 1890, when, by the joint influence of the Bimetallists and the Silver-producing States, was passed what is known as the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. This repealed the Bland Act of 1878, and decreed that the Secretary of the Treasury should every month purchase, at the market-price, four and a half million ounces of silver, paying for it in Treasury notes of from one to one thousand dollars each. These notes are what the old silver certificates were not—except for public dues—direct legal tender for all debts, unless an express contract is made to the contrary. They are also redeemable either in gold or silver, at the option of the Treasury. It was provided that the coinage of silver ordered under the Bland Act should cease on the 1st of July 1891, and that thereafter only as many silver dollars should be coined as might be needed for the redemption of the Treasury notes—which means none, for redemption is always wanted in gold, and has never so far been refused. The Treasury notes issued monthly vary in value according to the market-price of the four and a half million ounces of silver for which they are given. Now, for a short time after the passing of the Sherman Act, silver advanced, and went pretty rapidly up to about 1·20 dollars per ounce. But then came a reaction; and ever since, there has been a steady fall, which has brought about the present crisis. At the close of 1892 the price was only eighty-five cents, and it has since gone much lower.

The tremendous fall in the gold-price of silver, notwithstanding the large monthly purchase of the United States Government, has been puzzling alike to Bimetallists and Monometallists. It seems to be due to the very large increase in the output of the silver mines of the world, not only in America but elsewhere, and to a greater demand for gold for the settlement of international balances. Whether or not the Sherman Act would have succeeded in its purpose of preserving a permanent ratio between gold and silver, had it not been for the great and unexpected decline in silver, need not be here discussed. It has failed, and failed dismally; but it has also served to demonstrate the futility of any nation attempting to establish Bimetallism for itself and without regard to the other nations.

In the first year of the operation of the Sherman Act, there was a considerable addition to the volume of silver currency, due to special causes relating to the Tariff and Treasury disbursements, and this addition was mainly in the form of Treasury notes for the smaller amounts. What helped this circulation was an agreement among the banks to regard these notes as ordinary money, receivable for all purposes, as having a legal-tender quality and a gold basis. But in 1891 was experienced the great depression following upon what is known as the Baring crisis, with a consequent arrest of circulation, and accumulation of paper and silver in the hands of the banks. They resorted to the old practice of sending silver back to the Treasury through the Custom-house, &c.; while every month the Treasury was adding to the stock of notes in want of circulation. The silver purchases must go on, whatever the price, and so, month by month, the trade and commerce of the United States became crushed under the weight of redundant money.

It seems an odd thing to say, that a country can have too much money; but everything depends on the quality of the money. Of small-money, till-money, change-money, for the smaller purposes of daily life, a community needs only a limited supply, and any excess over actual needs must fall into the vaults of the banks or of the Government. Now, money is of no use when buried; it must circulate to be fruitful, and the more the volume of unproductive money increases the greater becomes the burden on the people. In active times of business, more change-money, or let us say pocket-money, is needed; and in dull times less; but the experience of America has proved that you cannot increase the demand for such money by merely increasing the supply.

We have said that the Sherman Act permits the redemption of the Treasury notes—paid for silver—in either gold or silver at the discretion of the Secretary; and we have also referred to these notes as resting on a gold basis. This apparent inconsistency requires explanation. While the Act allows this discretion, it also declares the policy of the United States to be to maintain the two metals on a parity with each other, at such ratio as may be provided by law. This declaration neutralises the discretion, for a refusal of the Treasury to pay any of the notes in gold when demanded, would have the immediate effect of depreciating the notes, and of thereby disturbing the parity between gold and silver. They would, in short, become mere silver certificates negotiable at fluctuating exchanges as the price of silver in terms of gold varied.

At the end of the third year of the operation of the Sherman Act—namely, in July 1893—there had been issued 147,000,000 dollars of these Treasury notes in payment of the purchases of silver bullion which the Act decreed should be made monthly. Only a small fraction of the bullion was actually turned into coin, and while the bulk remained unmined, the most of the Treasury notes given in payment had been presented for payment in gold and had been so paid. In the last year, for instance, 54,000,000 dollars of notes were paid for silver, and 49,000,000 dollars of these notes were redeemed in gold within the year. The Treasury

dare not, for the reasons explained, fall back on its option of paying them in silver; and in consequence the gold reserve which the Government is bound to keep for the redemption of other national obligations, was seriously reduced.

Silver continued to fall until in the present year it reached the lowest point on record. This continuous and serious decline was so menacing to the silver currency of India, and to the industries of the country, that the Indian Government declared they must either adopt Bimetallism—the remedial properties of which are, of course, denied by those who believe only in a single standard—or stop what is called the ‘free coinage’ of silver, that is, the issue at the mints of rupees for silver bullion, at a fixed rate, in any quantity to any person. Thereupon was appointed a Parliamentary Committee, under the presidency of Lord Herschell, to inquire into the whole circumstances, and to report to Parliament on the plans of the Indian Government. That Committee practically declared in favour of the suspension of free coinage, by admitting their inability to advise the Government to overrule the proposal. Immediately on the publication of the report, the Indian Government closed their mints against further receipts of silver—except in special circumstances, and for the necessary upkeep of the currency—and offered to supply rupees in exchange for gold (not silver) at the rate of one shilling and fourpence per rupee—that is, one-third less than its nominal value in India (two shillings).

We do not propose to deal just now with the tragic story of the ‘demoralised rupee,’ but return to the dollar. The effect of the decision of the Indian Government was to give a shock to metallic currency all over the world, to send down the price of silver still further—only temporarily, it is contended, as the supply will soon be brought into nicer relations to demand by the closing of unremunerative mines—and to produce a financial panic of an acute and far-reaching kind in the United States. As President Cleveland stated the position in his Message to Congress: ‘The knowledge in business circles among our own people, that our Government cannot make its fiat equivalent to intrinsic value, nor keep inferior money on a parity with superior money by its own independent efforts, has resulted in such a lack of confidence at home and instability of currency values, that capital refuses its aid to new enterprises, while millions are actually withdrawn from the channels of trade and commerce, to become idle and unproductive in the hands of timid owners. Foreign investors are equally alert, and not only decline to purchase American securities, but make haste to sacrifice those which they already have.’

Not only was the situation serious, but it was becoming every month more grave, because the supply of silver is increasing, with no present prospect of the maximum of production having been reached. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the economic evils of a depreciated currency; but if these evils press more heavily on one class than on another, it is upon those who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow at labour provided by capital. It is upon the masses of the people of the United States, therefore, that the burden of the ‘dead’ silver of the Sherman Act

falls, and it is to devise means for lightening or removing the burden that Congress was summoned to a special session after the Indian Government closed their mints—the first design being the repeal of that Act.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XL.—IN THE BOSOM OF THE FAMILY.

EARLY that morning, Mr Suffield had received a brief telegram from his wife: ‘George back. Broken down.’ Suffield at once arranged to go to London; and he arrived there in the evening, travelling third-class; for he accepted his poorer position at once without demur. ‘And really,’ he said to himself, ‘I believe I prefer third—unless I should want to sleep.’ When he entered the house at Rutland Gate he went first to the library; and as he glanced round upon the serried portraits of the Lords of Padiham, it was with an absolute sense of relief that he thought he would soon see them no more: he would no longer be afflicted with the sense of their superciliousness. He would go back to his own people, with his own people, and live and die among his own people, performing the duties he had foolishly laid down to take up others for which he had little taste and indifferent aptitude. He was thinking thus hopefully, when his wife entered behind him.

‘I have been looking for you, my dear,’ said she, approaching to greet him with a kiss. ‘Oh my poor, dear George!’ she cried. ‘My owd lad! What has come to you? You’ve no colour in your poor cheek, and your hair’s as white as it should be at eighty! Oh, my husband! My dear! And has it all worked this change upon you, my poor lad! My poor George! Oh, my dear! And you never told me!’

She kissed him, and wept over him, as a girl might over her soldier-lover, from whom she has long been parted, and who returns wounded and worn. And he stroked her dark hair in silence, and kept as firm a mouth as he could.

‘You got my letters, of course?’ said Suffield, who had written—with some reserve—to his wife daily during his absence in Lancashire.

‘I did.—But what about yesterday, George, my dear? What’s the end of it all?’ she asked.

‘It’s all over, my lass,’ he answered.

‘You mean,’ she exclaimed, clasping her hands tightly before her, ‘that we are completely ruined?’

‘Not altogether that, Joan, my dear,’ said he. ‘But we must leave this house, and sell or let th’ Hall and Park, and we must let Parliament alone, and go back to work.’

‘You have not made much of Parliament, have you, my dear owd lad?—so that need not distress us,’ she observed with a smile.

‘No, lass,’ said he; ‘I have not. I haven’t spoken, I admit. But I’ve given a good many

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votes, and I've set a good example. There's too much talk there already, and too little work.'

'And it's all,' said she, taking little note of what he had said, but sitting down, glancing this way and that, as if to review the whole situation, 'through the recklessness of that boy!'

'Nay, lass; it's our own fault,' said Suffield. 'Don't be too hard on th' lad. He's our own son, Joan: carried away wi' his own plans for getting on. He meant no harm—I ha' thought it all out—the thing is he shouldna ha' had th' whole machine trusted to him at his age.'

'And is it really so bad, George, as that we must go back to Lancashire and live in a small house?'

'It is, my lass,' said he, turning away and sitting down, saddened by the distress written on her face. 'There's about a hundred thousand gone, more or less!'

She followed him to his seat. The full light of the lamp now fell on him, and she again noted the worn and aged look he wore. The change in him smote her anew to the heart, and set free again her native founts of tenderness and generosity.

'Oh, my poor owd lad!' she cried, throwing her arms about his neck. 'How terrible it must have been for you to bear! I had hardly thought of that! I believe I've grown a selfish woman, my poor dear! My George! My husband!' She laid her head upon his breast and wept.

'There, my dear lass!' said he, soothing her. 'There! My dear wife! My owd sweetheart! My bonny bride!'

'Don't say these things to me now, George!' she murmured. 'I must think about all this, and see where we are. Have patience with me, won't you?'

'Patience, Joan, my dear!' said he. 'Of course, I'll have patience! And if this business makes us pull well together again, I shall thank God for it from th' bottom of my heart.—Do you know what we shall do, my lass? We'll go away back, out of the hurry and scurry of this London; when all is said and done, it's not very filling or satisfying!—away back to our ain countrie! You remember, Joan, how we used to sing, "O the oak, and the ash, and the bonny birken tree!—They all are growing green in my ain countrie!" We'll go back, my dear, to our ain folk, and we'll be as happy as ever we were—happier than we ha' been this twelvemonth! I ha' got my eye on that nice little house—for a year or two, at least—wi' th' creeper and the jasmine on the walls, and the evening primroses in the side-garden! And thou shalt be my own brave manager again!—mother o' th' house, and queen o' th' whole place!'

'You are very, very good to me, my dear!' said she.

Truly, 'sweet are the uses of adversity!' This worthy couple were beginning to discover—as

many have discovered before them—that worldly success—the gawds and superfluities of life, are only won by the sacrifice of much of life's essence. The cares of this world and of a family, and the deceitfulness of wealth and ambition, had choked the tender shoots of sentiment and driven love into abeyance, and, therefore, demonstrations of love into desuetude. It was only now, when they were awaked by the shock of their calamity, that they perceived how far apart they had drifted, and then they came together again, provoked by something of the warmth of a new affection!

'And now you will see George—won't you?' asked his wife.—'And about Lord Clitheroe!' she said suddenly. 'He's with George. I suppose he must be told?'

'Of course, he must!' said Suffield. 'Mustn't he? Are you afraid he'll want to cry off with Phemy?'

'He may,' said his wife, 'though not of himself, I think—but he may, under family pressure.'

The discussion of that matter, and of other matters in their mind, was interrupted by the announcement of the servant that Miss Raynor had called and was in the drawing-room.

'I wanted to speak to you about Bell, by the way,' said Mrs Suffield. 'She has called here every day almost since you have been gone, asking how things were going and if you were back yet. I can't make her out. She's so unlike herself—so subdued, so afraid of something, as it were. She hasn't been the same person, it seems to me, since Christmas.'

'Sayst tha?' exclaimed Suffield. 'Dost think she may repent o' her engagement to George? I always thought, tha knows, lass, that Ainsworth was th' man. Poor Bell! It won't do to let her make a mistake! We've had enow o' mistakes in th' family! I must talk to her.'

So they parted then, he to talk to Isabel, and she to make a preliminary statement to Lord Clitheroe, who was sitting by George.

'Well, Bell,' said Suffield, as he entered the drawing-room, 'what's this I hear about tha?'

Isabel turned palpably pale. 'What, uncle?' she asked. Then she exclaimed: 'Oh, how changed you are! My poor uncle!'

'Thou'rt changed, too, I hear. Looking ill and worried, I'm told. Let me look at tha?'

She submitted to his inspection, and blushed under it.

'What dost blush for?' he said kindly. 'I believe thou'rt turning more of a silly girl than thou ever wert! But tha doesn't look well. Tell me: what's th' matter?'

'I'm really very well, uncle,' said she. 'But I have been troubled about you. How has this business turned out with you, uncle? Aunt has told me something of it.'

He was silent, as if considering what he should say.

'Won't you tell me?' she said.

'Well,' said he, 'things have turned out what would be called "bad;" but somehow their "badness" makes me happier than if they had

turned out better. We'll ha' to give up this house at once, and sell or let the Hall and all about it; we shall be just able to keep th' works going, and so we'll ha' to live in a very economical way in a small house for some years.'

'My poor dear uncle!' exclaimed Isabel.

'Law bless thy heart and soul!' said he. 'I like to think of it! I shall be out of this blessed Parliament business; and I'll go back to real work!—And,' he added in a lower tone, as if to himself, 'the wife and I'll be together again!'

'Uncle,' said Isabel, 'I have a request—a petition—to make of you.'

'Say on, my lass,' said Suffield. 'Thou shalt ha' t', though 'twere th' half o' my poor kingdom.'

'It's a favour I failed to get from you, uncle,' said Isabel, 'a little while ago.'

'What's that?'

'Take this money now! You need it now, if you didn't before! Don't—please, don't!—refuse me again! Dear uncle, you don't know how much you will oblige me, how happy you will make me, by doing as I ask you!'

'Bell, my dear, let's ha' no more o' that! That money's thine, and 'twill be settled upon thee at thy marriage!—Hast seen George, by the way?'

'Yes,' said she with a blush; 'I have seen him. He is changed too.'

'There's a small favour I ha' to ask o' thee, Bell, my dear,' said her uncle, taking her hand. 'I ha' been a kind o' father to you, lass—ha'n't I?'

'Dear uncle, you have been more than a father!—you've been the dearest friend as well!'

'Now I claim th' privilege o' a father and friend. Answer me a question, like a good, honest girl, as yo' are: Art quite happy in thy engagement to George? Don't be afraid to answer me, my dear!'

Isabel was taken unawares, and was painfully moved; but she kept her self-possession.

'That is a question, uncle!' said she. 'But I will not answer it until you have granted me the favour I ask, and accepted my money.'

Her uncle shook his head, dropped her hand, and turned away. That had barely happened, when Mrs Suffield entered to say that George wished to see his father. Isabel said she could not stay longer that night; so she went, and her uncle and aunt went up to George, who was in bed.

Father and son gripped each other's hand and looked into each other's eyes, with perfect understanding of sincere repentance on the one side, and complete forgiveness on the other.

'It has taken it out of you, dad,' said George.

Then his father, having described his difficulties with Gorgonio and the cotton, demanded an account of his son's—and his prospective son-in-law's—adventures.

'Thou'rt more reduced than me, my lad,' said he.

'I'm all right, dad,' answered George. 'I'll be up to-morrow.'

'No, you won't,' said Clitheroe, stroking his big red beard.—'He caught low fever in Spain,' he observed to Suffield: 'the floods were out.'

'You had rather a bad time of it, then?' said Suffield.

'Very bad,' answered Clitheroe, looking at his hairy hands.

'And where are your prisoners?—I suppose you brought them safe?'

'And now,' said Clitheroe, 'they're in safe keeping!—the brutes!'

'Hadn't yo' better tell me all about it?' said Suffield.

'Let me ask you this, father,' said George with a smile, 'before Clitheroe begins his story: Can you understand anybody being afraid of your Tame Philosopher and Secretary?—mortally, supernaturally afraid?'

'No,' said Suffield decidedly; 'I certainly cannot.'

'Well, I have found there is such a man; and his name is Daniel Trichinopoly! M'Fie is the one man in England that Daniel fears, or, for the matter of that, I believe, respects. He has a dread of his tremendous speeches, which he can't understand any more than I can, and he thinks him learned enough to be a wizard or something of that kind. I've told you that, father, because, if it hadn't been for Daniel's fear of the Philosopher, we should never have caught him or the other! He and Tanderjee would have got away a week sooner, and have reached Port Said—where they meant to leave the ship—if Daniel had not been afraid to stir while the Philosopher was weltering in that opium den: he was afraid the spells of the Philosopher would blight his life, if he did not himself release him from that horrible place! And Daniel insisted, in spite of all Tanderjee could say—insisted on staying to release him! So your Philosopher has been of more use than I ever thought he would be!'

'It is certainly most astonishing,' said Suffield. 'But let me hear the whole story.'

Clitheroe then, aided by George at intervals, related their adventures.

They reached Marseilles at midnight of the day after they left London. No regular steamer could possibly reach Gibraltar in time to intercept the *Travancore*; and both floods and bandits were said to be out in Spain, so that the train did not seem hopeful either. They therefore resolved to try to hire a fast steam-vessel, and that without delay, or else they would not reach Gibraltar in time. By exceeding good luck—so good that George called it providential—they met on the quay a yachting acquaintance of Clitheroe's, who was waiting for his belated boat to take him on board his steam-yacht outside. To him Clitheroe told their urgent need, and he at once responded by offering to take them to Gibraltar. Therefore, when the boat came, all four entered it: the owner, Clitheroe and George, and the detective. The weather was foul, and they reckoned it would take them all their time to reach Gibraltar by Tuesday, the *Travancore's* day of call. It was then George showed his prowess and skill as a stoker. He stripped to feed the furnace himself, on a method he had developed for keeping the fire always bright, and forcing the pace without waste of fuel.

'If everything else failed him,' said Clitheroe, 'he would soon get a place as chief-stoker.' (That was his only allusion to their losses.)

They reached Gibraltar in good time, and had everything in order for the arrest of the fugitives. When the *Travancore* came in, they boarded her without ostentation. Daniel was nicely caught as he appeared from below to take the air; and Tanderjee had a hand laid on his shoulder as he stood contemplating the great fortified rock: neither, it was clear, had in the least expected that they might be pursued and arrested. Daniel set his arrest down to the evil divinations of the Tame Philosopher. Daniel wished to throw his turban overboard; but George caught it, and found the plans concealed in its folds. The bank draft on Bombay for the six thousand pounds was found on Tanderjee's person, and in his baggage a considerable number of sovereigns.

'You did very well then, my lad,' said Suffield. 'I was afraid to ask you what success you'd had.'

So they brought their prisoners away in the yacht, without mishap. Daniel's behaviour was singular. He laboured to propitiate George; he was submissive, sweet-tempered, and affable; and he begged that his hands might be left free, even if his legs were tied, so that he might stoke the furnace in place of 'the respectable Sahib George.' But George answered him: 'There is a saying, Daniel, in your own India: "If a man deceives me once, shame on him; if he deceives me twice, shame on me!"' With which words of wisdom Daniel seemed so subdued and humbled that he urged his request no more.

They steamed on for about three days, making but poor progress because of a head-wind. But on the third day a gale arose and grew to a hurricane. They panted and bored through a complete welter and bewilderment of mingled sea and sky. Never, George declared, had he been in such weather, nor had he ever conceived the Mediterranean capable of it. They had been somewhat hugging the Spanish shore, and in their attempt to weather the projecting land between Alicante and Valencia they were driven ashore; but fortunately they drove into a fairly sheltered cove. They passed a terrible night on land, even though after an hour the storm sank almost as suddenly as it had arisen, and though they were able to bring some means of shelter ashore from the yacht. Then they had experience how little Daniel's professions were to be trusted. He and Tanderjee were caught in the night in an attempt on the persons and purses of George and Clitheroe. (The detective had been left on guard over them, but had succumbed to sleep.) In the morning they found a fishing village; but by then George was alternately shivering and burning with fever. By the close of that first day on land he was helpless and delirious, and they had perforce to remain in such poor accommodation as they could find.

'It was a terrible time,' said George. 'But the Spanish folk were very kind; and I should like to go and see them again some day.'

Meantime the owner of the yacht and his small crew took the vessel back to Alicante for such repairs as she demanded. Those left behind resolved to remain until the return of the yacht; for they were in a wild country, far from a railway—and the safety of railway travelling was still uncertain at best—and George was and would be for days unequal to the fatigues of a

rough journey. At length the yacht returned, and so—and so they returned to Marseilles, and home.

'And all's well that ends well,' said Suffield. '—And now, my dear,' said he to his wife, 'would you and our good friend, Clitheroe, mind leaving George and me together? I have one or two things I should like to talk to him about. When the two had withdrawn. 'You've seen Isabel, I suppose, my lad?' said he.

'Yes, father, I've seen her.'

'And what dost think o' her?—her looks, I mean?—Dostna think she looks ill?'

'She doesn't look well, certainly. I suppose she has been worried like the rest of us. Poor Bell! I don't know why our worry should wear her.'

'That's just it,' said his father. 'I don't think "worry" accounts for it. Hast ever noticed anything in her way wi' yo' that might make yo' think, when yo' consider, that she's not just over head and ears in love wi' yo', my lad?'

'I don't think, dad, she *is* over head and ears: she is very nice and affectionate: I think—I believe—she likes me very much. What more would you have? I don't think Bell is a girl to be over head and ears in love: she is too sensible and wise.'

'That's where, in my opinion,' said his father, 'most o' us are wrong about that girl.—Now, my dear lad, I should be sorry to upset you about nothing; but I think it's best to be frank about this matter I ha' in my mind. Bell is a girl that don't make much fuss about her feelings, but she's got them stronger than most girls. One o' her strongest feelings—I know it: I understand her—is enormous, absurd gratitude to this miserable family for the little we've done for her. It has always troubled her that she had no great chance to show it. A chance came. Dost know, lad, that twice over she's begged and prayed me to take her money—all o't!—to help us in this business?'

'She pressed it—pressed it hard!—on me that afternoon I went away.'

'There yo' are!—Now I ha' it borne in on me—I may be wrong; I hope, my lad, for your sake, I am—that her promise to marry you, lad, is part o' that same absurd gratitude! She knew you wanted her; she knew I'd like it; and she saw latterly your mother was not against it! And so, to please us all, thinking little o' herself, she engages herself to marry you, my lad! And now, when she thinks o' th' thing, it looks a more serious business to give herself away like that than she imagined. I'm sure she's got stronger feelings in her than she ever seems to ha' shown to you, lad. I hope to goodness, my dear lad, I'm wrong. But tha dostna want to mak' another mistake, and tha dostna want, I'm sure, to tak' Bell to wife on those terms. Think it over quietly, lad—speak to Bell about it to-morrow—she'll be here, no doubt—and according as tha finds her, do th' right thing by her and by thyself!'

George was pale and agitated. 'All right, father. I'll think it over.—You'd better leave me alone now, dad.'

'God bless tha, lad,' said his father, with a quiver of the lip, 'and gi'e thee a brave heart!'

George lay still—wretchedly still!—for a little

while; and then suddenly he jumped from bed and hurriedly dressed, weak and trembling though he was. In a few minutes he slipped down-stairs, passed from the house, and called a cab. He must see Bell! He could not wait!

(To be continued.)

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE question has been mooted whether it is possible to raise the wreck of the ill-fated 'Victoria' from her watery grave of eighty fathoms (four hundred and eighty feet). It is reported that a firm has already offered to undertake the work of salvage; but it is improbable that there is any possibility of floating the vessel. The greatest impediment is that of depth, for even with improved apparatus the diver—whose help in stopping leaks is imperatively demanded, as the prelude to such operations—is limited in his excursions from the surface of the water. The greatest recorded depth to which any diver has penetrated is claimed for Captain Christiansen, who recently, at Elliott Bay, Washington Territory, remained for twenty minutes at a depth of one hundred and ninety-six feet from the surface. It may be mentioned here, that, according to the calculation of an officer of the United States navy, the blow which sent the 'Victoria' to the bottom of the sea had a force equivalent to that of a railway train of six large Pullman cars drawn by the heaviest locomotive and running at a speed of fifty miles per hour.

A most magnificent specimen of a sixteenth-century Persian carpet has just been acquired by the South Kensington Museum. It has come from the Mosque of Ardebil, where it has been well known and much coveted for some time past. The sum required for its purchase was so great that had it not been for the generosity of several English gentlemen, the nation would not have been able to secure this carpet, which is quite the finest of its kind in Europe. The groundwork is of dark blue, ornamented with a floral design; the centre consists of a large medallion worked in pale yellow, with various coloured cartouches disposed round it. Each corner of the carpet contains a section of the same pattern as the centre medallion, with cartouches surrounding it. The border is very beautiful, and is formed of alternate long and circular panels, around which—on a brown ground covered with a floral pattern—is a lobed outline. A panel bearing the following inscription makes a heading to the carpet: 'I have no refuge in the world other than thy threshold. My head has no protection other than this porch-way. The work of the slave of the Holy Place, Maksoud of Kashan, in the year 942 (1535 A.D.).' 'The work of the slave' Maksoud is thirty-four feet six inches by seventeen feet six inches, and so finely is it woven, that there are three hundred and eighty knots, all hand-tied, in a square inch. There are thirty-three million hand-tied knots in the whole carpet. As a work of art this carpet is most remarkable, on account of its beautiful colouring, grand design, great size, and extreme fineness of texture. The fact also of the date and place of manufacture being inscribed upon it, acts

as a guide in trying to fix the date and locality of certain textures of Persian carpets.

The extent to which the flowers of the 'Chrysanthemum cinerarifolium' are cultivated in Dalmatia in order to supply the world with so-called insect powder is little known. The plant can be cultivated in almost any kind of soil, and it is a matter for some surprise that it should hitherto have been confined to the Austrian province of Dalmatia and the neighbouring Montenegro. The flowers find a market at Trieste, where the annual value of the trade amounts to as much as fifty thousand pounds. But it would seem that there will shortly be competitors to deal with, for the plant has recently been introduced into South Africa, California, and Australia. It is said that the plantations in Dalmatia have suffered much from the severity of the past winter, and the result of the recently gathered harvest is therefore awaited with some anxiety.

The question has often been asked, whether any meaning is to be attached to the song of birds, and some doubt has been thrown on the supposition that joy or sorrow is thus expressed by the fact that birds have been known to break into apparently happy melody when flames have been threatening their cages. Dr Morris Gibbs, an American naturalist, has been making observations in this direction by robbing the nests of song-birds and then listening for the result, allowing in every case ample time for the more gifted male to hear of the burglary. In no case was it possible to say that the song which ensued expressed sorrow or complaint; and Dr Gibbs says that he could never distinguish any difference between it and the warbling he was accustomed to hear. While expressing a hope that the burglar duly restored the stolen property after he had satisfied his curiosity, we may venture to remark that as there are sounds beyond the limit of the human ear to appreciate, so there may be others the meaning of which the ear can never fathom.

The *Journal des Mines* in a recent issue states that the trade of the island of Madagascar in 1892 received a decided stimulus by the discovery of a new india-rubber tree. The discovery of this tree came very fortunately to relieve the Madagascar market, which was at such a low ebb that the Tamatave houses were closing their agencies on the north-east coast, and the Americans suppressed their Majunga houses. The discovery is of very great importance, and almost constitutes a commercial revolution. The trade formerly carried on between Farafangana and Fort Dauphin was confined to a few products, which were obtained only in small quantities. Merchants were almost completely disheartened, and had abandoned the market to small traders. As long as the working of the new rubber tree lasts, things will go well; but unfortunately the probable duration of this working is estimated at only two years.

A firm of manufacturers in Chemnitz has patented a new material which is said to be admirably adapted for curtains. In composition it consists of seventy-five per cent. of india-rubber, three per cent. wool-dust, five per cent. pulverised fruit-stones, ten per cent. amber varnish, and five per cent. leather waste, to which infusorial earth

can be added if convenient. This compound, after being tempered with carbon bisulphide, is kneaded into a thick mass, which is afterwards rolled into leaves and decorated as fancy may dictate.

Mr W. S. B. Woolhouse, a distinguished mathematician, who died in London recently at the age of eighty-four, had at one time a curious problem to solve. This was in connection with the Ten Hours' Bill, and the question to be determined was the distance daily walked by a factory girl in attending the 'mules'—running backwards and forwards and tying the threads. The late Lord Shaftesbury commissioned the mathematician to go down to Manchester and obtain the necessary data; and the journey was made, the calculations done, and the report of the result sent off the same evening. It was found that each girl made a journey of upwards of thirty miles daily—a record which would put to the blush many strong men who regard themselves as able pedestrians.

A new method of preserving timber is by the use of naphthaline. The timber to be treated is placed in a tank of the liquid, which, by means of steam-pipes, is maintained at a temperature of about two hundred degrees Fahrenheit. According to the size of the timber, it is subjected to immersion in this heated liquid for from two to twelve hours, during which time the sap is expelled and the naphthaline takes its place. It is said that the system gives excellent results, and that wood treated in the way described is so susceptible of polishing that the mere rub with a rag will make its surface shine.

The unveiling of a granite memorial, and the presentation of congratulatory addresses to Sir J. B. Lawes and Dr Gilbert at Rothamsted, is an event that must not be passed over in silence, for the occasion is unique. For fifty years past have these two industrious workers been solving problems and making careful experiments in order to place agriculture on a more scientific basis. Both in the field and in the handsome laboratory which they have equipped, has this work gone on continuously for the past half-century, and this at the expense of Sir J. B. Lawes. Not only this; but the work is not to cease although the original labourers must at some time rest. The experimental ground and the laboratory, together with a sum of one hundred thousand pounds, are vested in trustees, and the future guidance of the magnificent enterprise will be under a Committee. It is seldom that a great work like this which might well be expected from a Government department, is undertaken by individual and unselfish effort.

The gradual development of the railroad is well illustrated in the 'Transportation Building' of the Chicago Exhibition. First, there is part of the plank road laid by the Romans across a moor near Osnabrueck, which was unearthed last year from the six feet of moss, &c., which had covered it, and probably preserved it. The wooden planks are of course much decayed; but the method of fastening down by long wooden pins is quite apparent. Another type of tramway is illustrated by a thirty-inch gauge road dating from the sixteenth century, and still in use in many parts of Hungary. Next is shown a piece

of the rough road with its cast-iron rails which was in use in Wales more than a hundred years ago. It was upon this railway that Trevethick tried in 1804 to run an engine driven by steam. These old methods of laying railroads are contrasted with great effect with the ponderous steel railroads of to-day.

A curious reversion to an old photographic process is seen in the productions of the recently established Birmingham Dry Collodion Plate and Film Company. The dry collodion plate dates from 1856, and at one time it was largely used, especially by landscape photographers. It was so slow in action that it was not adapted for portraiture, and we need hardly say that such, so-called, instantaneous pictures as are now possible with gelatine plates were quite beyond its ken. But about three years ago it was announced that Dr Hill Norris, who was one of the pioneers of the process, had solved the problem of producing a dry collodion plate which was equal in rapidity to gelatine, and the company above mentioned was formed to work the process. It remains to be seen whether these anticipations will be realised. If, happily, they should be, photographers will have at their disposal a plate combining more advantages than any light-sensitive surface yet discovered.

The electric current as now 'laid on' in so many Metropolitan thoroughfares is likely to prove an immense boon to manufacturers requiring motive-power at a cheap rate. The current can be switched on or off as required, and the consumer pays only for what he uses. We recently saw in a workshop in London an automatic shaping-machine worked by the electric current from the street main. In this case the motor was doing all the work of a gas engine which it had replaced, and although it was kept constantly at work during the daylight hours, the cost of current was less than two shillings per week.

The operation of building a boat is always a pleasant one to watch, for from the time when the keel is laid it seems to gradually grow under the workman's hands as he adds plank to plank and secures each by copper nails. But this mode of construction is now giving way to a very different one. Boats are now being made of mild steel in two halves, which are pressed into shape by hydraulic power. The two parts are riveted to a metal bar which is bent up to form stem, keel, and sternpost all in one. Buoyancy chambers are then added, the usual fittings put in place, and the thing is complete. Such a boat, it is found by experience, is far more efficient than a wooden one; it offers so little friction to the water, that it will sail faster and pull easier than a boat of the old kind; and it will never leak, although it may be kept out of the water for months at a time.

According to the 'Newcastle Chronicle,' the police of that place are provided with a telephonic apparatus, which by means of an affixing pin and small key will enable them to communicate with the fire brigade through the medium of the street fire alarms placed in various parts of the city. In the case of a fire occurring on his beat, the policeman would open the glass door of the fire alarm, affix his telephone to the apparatus and would then be in direct communication with the brigade, so as to give them the

exact locality of the fire, and thus save those first precious minutes which often decide the fate of a burning building.

Five years ago, a Commission was appointed to inquire into the action of light upon water-colours; and as a result, certain pigments were found to be most fugitive, and therefore not fit for use by the painter. But it was found that all pigments preserved their tints if deprived of air. Acting upon this hint, Mr W. S. Simpson has devised a means of keeping water-colour drawings 'in vacuo,' and therefore quite protected from both air and damp. The plan is a simple one, the drawing being laid face down in a tray having a glass bottom, and being then covered in at the back; by means of a Sprengel pump the air is then exhausted from the little chamber formed by the tray, and the picture is subsequently sealed up. By means of a small instrument attached, it can be seen if any leakage occurs; but if the seal remain intact, the picture may be regarded as absolutely safe from any chance of fading.

The 'Primula obconica,' a very beautiful and favourite plant, has been charged again and again with very mischievous effects upon the skin of those who handle it; while others who are well acquainted with plants have found it to be quite innocuous. It would seem, however, that certain persons are affected by it. A doctor, writing to the 'Lancet,' describes how a lady patient of his, in order to test the question, lightly brushed a bundle of leaves of the suspected plant across her forearm, with the result that twelve hours afterwards an eruption appeared, accompanied by an almost intolerable itching. She also found that the fingers after touching the plant would communicate the eruption to the face. Before this test, the patient in question had suffered much from skin irritation, but with the banishment of the cause the malady ceased altogether.

The plague of wasps which this exceptionally dry summer has brought upon us has caused many suggestions to be made as to the best way of destroying these destructive insects in their nests. The killing of a few stray wasps has little effect in diminishing their numbers, and they must be attacked *en masse*. A spoonful of powdered potassium cyanide dropped into the entrance of a nest at night-time is said to be effective in destroying all the inmates; but the risks attaching to the handling of such a deadly poison are far more serious than any connected with wasps. Coal-tar mixed with paraffin to render it more fluid, is a good and cheap nest destroyer, and we have used a small quantity of strong ammonia with effective results. The correspondent of a contemporary asserts that a pledget of tow dipped in coal-tar and thrust into the entry to the nest will effectually dispose of the inmates. They do not store food, as bees do, and are dependent upon a daily supply; and as they will not, or cannot, get through the tarry obstruction, they quickly die by starvation. It is certain that all nests discovered should be destroyed, or the prospects for next season will be alarming.

Experiments have recently been made by Rigler with a view to determine the value of ammonia vapour as a disinfectant, when various organisms were subjected to treatment, including Koch's cholera bacillus, the typhoid

bacillus, and the bacilli associated with diphtheria and anthrax. These organisms were exposed in a room filled with ammonia vapour, while at the same time others were exposed to air. In every case the ammonia vapour killed the organisms in from two to four hours. It is therefore indicated that ammonia vapour is a valuable means of disinfection; and its cheapness, cleanliness, and harmless character as regards furniture and clothing should further recommend it. It would be interesting to know whether a room charged with ammonia vapour to such a degree as not to impede a person's breathing would have a beneficial effect upon a patient suffering from any one of the diseases which the bacilli experimented upon represent.

A statement was recently made to the effect that the eucalyptus takes six months to sprout, and that sixty years must elapse before it grows into a tree of respectable proportions. Lieutenant Sclater, who has had much experience of the tree in Africa, says that this is a mistake. At Blantyre there is a fine avenue of these trees, which were planted by the Church of Scotland Mission only sixteen years ago, and now they are sixty feet high and from two to three feet in diameter. Other trees had grown to twenty feet high in as many months. The two statements possibly refer to eucalyptus trees of different varieties.

ON EXTINCTION.

THE passing away of ineffective things, the entire rejection by Nature of the plans of life, is the essence of tragedy. In the world of animals, that runs so curiously parallel with the world of men, we can see and trace only too often the analogies of our grimmer human experiences; we can find the equivalents to the sharp tragic force of Shakespeare, the majestic inevitableness of Sophocles, and the sordid dreary tale, the middle-class misery, of Ibsen. The life that has schemed and struggled and committed itself, the life that has played and lost, comes at last to the pitiless judgment of time, and is slowly and remorselessly annihilated. This is the saddest chapter of biological science—the tragedy of Extinction.

In the long galleries of the geological museum are the records of judgments that have been passed graven upon the rocks. Here, for instance, are the huge bones of the 'Atlantosaurus,' one of the mightiest land animals that this planet has ever seen. A huge terrestrial reptile this, that crushed the forest trees as it browsed upon their foliage, and before which the pigmy ancestors of our present denizens of the land must have fled in abject terror of its mere might of weight. It had the length of four elephants, and its head towered thirty feet—higher, that is, than any giraffe—above the world it dominated. And yet this giant has passed away, and left no children to inherit the earth. No living thing can be traced back to these monsters; they are at an end among the branchings of the tree of life. Whether it was through some change of climate, some subtle disease, or some subtle enemy, these titanic reptiles dwindled in numbers, and faded at last altogether among things mundane. Save for the riddle of their scattered bones, it is as if they had never been.

Beside them are the pterodactyls, the first of vertebrated animals to spread a wing to the wind, and follow the hunted insects to their last refuge of the air. How triumphantly and gloriously these winged lizards, these original dragons, must have floated through their new empire of the atmosphere! If their narrow brains could have entertained the thought, they would have congratulated themselves upon having gained a great and inalienable heritage for themselves and their children for ever. And now we cleave a rock and find their bones, and speculate doubtfully what their outer shape may have been. No descendants are left to us. The birds are no offspring of theirs, but lighter children of some clumsy 'dinosaurs.' The pterodactyls also have heard the judgment of extinction, and are gone altogether from the world.

The long roll of paleontology is half filled with the records of extermination; whole orders, families, groups, and classes have passed away and left no mark and no tradition upon the living fauna of the world. Many fossils of the older rocks are labelled in our museums, 'of doubtful affinity.' Nothing living has any part like them, and the baffled zoologist regretfully puts them aside. What they mean, he cannot tell. They hint merely at shadowy dead subkingdoms, of which the form eludes him. Index fingers are they, pointing into unfathomable darkness, and saying only one thing clearly, the word 'Extinction.'

In the living world of to-day the same forces are at work as in the past. One Fate still spins, and the gleaming scissors cut. In the last hundred years the swift change of condition throughout the world, due to the invention of new means of transit, geographical discovery, and the consequent 'swarming' of the whole globe by civilised men, has pushed many an animal to the very verge of destruction. It is not only the dodo that has gone; for dozens of genera and hundreds of species, this century has witnessed the writing on the wall.

In the fate of the bison extinction has been exceptionally swift and striking. In the 'forties' so vast were their multitudes that sometimes, 'as far as the eye could reach,' the plains would be covered by a galloping herd. Thousands of hunters, tribes of Indians, lived upon them. And now! It is improbable that one specimen in an altogether wild state survives. If it were not for the merciful curiosity of men, the few hundred that still live would also have passed into the darkness of non-existence. Following the same grim path are the seals, the Greenland whale, many Australian and New Zealand animals and birds ousted by more vigorous imported competitors, the black rat, endless wild birds. The list of destruction has yet to be made in its completeness. But the grand bison is the statuesque type and example of the doomed races.

Can any of these fated creatures count? Does any suspicion of their dwindling numbers dawn upon them? Do they, like the Red Indian, perceive the end to which they are coming? For most of them, unlike the Red Indian, there is no alternative of escape by interbreeding with their supplanters. Simply and unconditionally, there is written across their future, plainly for any reader, the one word 'Death.'

Surely a chill of solitude must strike to the heart of the last stragglers in the rout, the last survivors of the defeated and vanishing species. The last shaggy bison, looking with dull eyes from some western bluff across the broad prairies, must feel some dim sense that those wide rolling seas of grass were once the home of myriads of his race, and are now his no longer. The sunniest day must shine with a cold and desert light on the eyes of the condemned. For them the future is blotted out, and hope is vanity.

These days are the days of man's triumph. The awful solitude of such a position is almost beyond the imagination. The earth is warm with men. We think always with reference to men. The future is full of men to our preconceptions, whatever it may be in scientific truth. In the loneliest position in human possibility, humanity supports us. But Hood, who sometimes rose abruptly out of the most mechanical punning to sublime heights, wrote a travesty, grotesquely fearful, of Campbell's 'The Last Man.' In this he probably hit upon the most terrible thing that man can conceive as happening to man: the earth desert through a pestilence, and two men, and then one man, looking extinction in the face.

SHE COMES.

I.

I sit beside the stream; and all the air
Is full of insect life. A heron dips
And flaps away. The noon-day's welcome glare
Brings drowsiness to every bee that sips.

II.

I hear Her coming! Hear her soft-shod feet
Along the dun dust road their owner bear.
Anon the winding lane will hide my sweet,
But my warm fancy pictures her still there.

III.

I feel Her coming! Glancing swallows bring
The news in flights; and each bird will rejoice
With gentle flutter, and prepare to sing
Some strains to suit the music of her voice.

IV.

I see Her coming! Fairer than before
She seems to me in grace, in every part.
Will her repose some calm to me restore? . . .
Oh! may my eyes not show her all my heart.

DELINE PAYN.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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OLD SONGS AND NEW SAWS.

By MRS LYNN LINTON.

A VOLUME of old sea-songs makes interesting reading. It is all so archaic, so old-fashioned, yet fresh withal. The days are so far off when sailors were crimped and their Susans waved lily hands while their Annas died—when Neptune and Freedom claimed equal parts in the 'snug little island,' and the sea existed chiefly for the benefit of Britannia and her ships—when one Englishman could lick three Frenchmen, and the cry that Britons never shall be slaves went up to heaven in one of the proudest shouts the world has ever heard—when the defeat of the Invincible Armada was still a living fact in the hearts and minds of our brave, bluff, grog-drinking blue-jackets, inspiring them with confidence and honouring themselves in their predecessors—those days are all so far off now as to almost belong to another era and another race; for that sentiment of national glory and honour which they embodied has become as an idle dream. If Dibdin were to write in the same spirit to-day, he would be assailed by the press as a brutal and unimaginative Jingo; and it would be incontestably shown how far out he was in his calculations, and how, instead of success commercial, military, or naval, we Britons are doomed to failure all round—instead of victory, it is we who shall have to bite the dust, and submit to defeat in any European war that may come.

Perhaps it is so. With our 'hearts of oak' may have gone the gallant tars who manned them. Under present conditions the fighting force of a ship is greater, but the fighting value of the men is less than in the olden time. It is not men so much as machinery—not fighters so much as scientific mechanics who crowd that huge floating workshop. Valour is at a discount, but a good eye is as priceless as was once a stout heart; and the stoker and engineer in their stifling dogholes are of infinitely more importance than the blue-jackets on deck—pic-

turesque, breezy, well-disciplined, but more automatic than in the old boarding and individual times. This change of function may have really touched the temper of the service. Undoubtedly it is less rough than in the old grog-loving days. Not even Rudyard Kipling, the most masculine of our modern writers, would put out songs such as 'Nothing like Grog,' 'The Flowing Can,' 'The Sailor's Sheet-anchor'—said sheet-anchor being 'Grog, smiling Grog'—with others of like character. In a day when great lords forbid the sale of so much as a glass of beer on their estates, and force all their hotels and wayside inns to be teetotal, the praises of 'Grog' would not be well received, and the 'can of flip' is out of date. All other things have undergone this law of change. The dainty tastes and philanthropic softness by which this generation is distinguished, have robbed the navy of its former discomforts; and the danger now is, not of unnecessary hardship but of undue coddling, by which our sailors, like our soldiers, will be rendered less fit for the rough work of war than were their less delicately handled and more Spartan-bred predecessors. Be that as it may, the sea-songs of nigh a hundred years ago breathe a spirit for which one may look in vain among our modern utterances, and we have instead a string of sayings—a set of principles utterly at variance with all we have as yet ever known or honoured.

For the old war-cry embodied in our patriotism we have substituted a something we call cosmopolitanism, which we make synonymous with civilisation, while patriotism or love of one's country is dismissed as Jingoism, the which is as a word accursed. We are told that monopoly is base, mean, selfish—the very antipodes of that altruism which as Christians it is our bounden duty to practise, which as civilised men is the sign and seal of our moral and intellectual culture. We are to have no monopoly, neither of country nor family. A very charming writer has told us so, and has shown—to his own satisfaction, at all events—what a sadly selfish and immoral

thing patriotism is. No more sea-songs glorying in our own prowess and the defeat of our foes. Instead of these, pretty little piping peans, lauding universal peace, which we are somehow to inaugurate by giving up all pretensions to superiority everywhere, by generously opening the gates whereby our enemies may come to afternoon tea in our citadel, and our rivers may be made available for their ships of war to fraternise with our house-boats. It is a lovely picture. A doubt may arise in the minds of the sceptical whether it be possible or no. But then the sceptical, like the Cassandras, are nuisances. When they fall into the midst of the believers, the chances are they will be put out like non-paying tenants, deficient as they are in their title of faith in a new human nature and a new cosmopolitan policy.

One of the modern phrases which covers a great deal of ground is that well-worked 'fin-de-siècle.' Now nothing is so arbitrary as well as conditional as time. Beginning with the rotation of the earth, which of itself is not absolutely unchangeable, man goes on to the self-made and arbitrary numeration of hundreds and thousands of years. Our day and night, seasons and the years can be accounted for, and their influence on nature, and on man with the rest of nature, is a physical fact. But when we come to the end of one conventional batch of years, how in the name of fortune should there be any valid change in the condition of things human and historic? Why should the end of the century excuse—still less explain—the sudden outbursts of feminine eccentricity and of unpatriotic impulse, for both of which their apologists think they have said all that need be said when they murmur 'fin-de-siècle?' What has this 'fin-de-siècle' to do with the queer state of mind which makes certain men laugh to scorn the idea of fighting for their country should it be invaded? 'Invaders should just once bite of the dust, and not a bit more of the island,' sounds to them sheer nonsense. What does it matter under whose régime we live? 'Give me forty pounds a year, and let me live in the sun in Italy, and I would not care who governed in England,' said one of our modern patriots. 'I should prefer Frenchmen to my own countrymen,' said another of the same school. 'The French are artists, and we are not.' 'It would be a good thing,' said a third, 'if we were conquered and ruled by a foreign power; it would make a better amalgam.' That was his translation of the modern idea of a universal brotherhood. But these same impartial cosmopolitans all demand that Britain should give up India, Burma, Egypt, come out of Mashonaland, cease to share in the partition of Africa, and should bring the Empire down to the nice manageable little dimensions of Holland or Belgium, with Scotland for our summer quarters and England for our winter, and the Continent to remain as now, the waste vat wherein to pour our superfluous margin.

'The union of hearts' is another phrase which has travelled beyond its original application. It is a phrase full of beautiful suggestions, far more beautiful than those rough old injunctions to 'stand to their guns' and 'conquer again and again,' which the sea-songs of a former time insisted on. This union is always to be accomplished by the strong giving the weak the power of damaging and annoying. Set that weaker creature on horseback and then make sure that he will meekly trot at the heels of a pedestrian leader. Put the whip into his hands and the raw places well within sight and touch, and then make just as sure that he will not flick the lash when his own good is to be got out of that other's pain. This may be sublime philosophy, but somehow it does not quite smack of an unregenerate human nature; and the experiment would be hazardous, all things considered. 'Put your trust in God, my boys, and keep your powder dry,' has a better ring and seems more likely to scan right.

Again, no modern word has done so much harm as that tip-tilted sneer of 'gush.' It bans all honest enthusiasm and casts the cold shadow of contempt on the rose-coloured energies of praise. It reduces the expression of patriotism to bunkum, and that of personal affection to the silliness of sentimentality. Over whatever it passes it leaves the traces of blight, and the mildew of its poison mars the fairest thought and the sweetest emotion. But those old sea-songs are full of what the modern 'fin-de-siècle' school would call 'gush.' They are all the lovelier on that account, and have all the firmer hold on the natural and sincere. When they aver that no spot on the globe is so perfect, so beautiful, or so happy as England, we may smile; but we think that 'better form' than the lavish abuse of our own country which it is the fashion of the day to pour out. When they celebrate our victories and talk of our flag as a sacred emblem which a man would rather die than desert, that comes home to our heart more than the cynical sneer of the most un-English of Englishmen when he affirms that he does not even know our flag—would not be able to tell it from the German, the French, the Italian, and would not care a button for it if he did. Black-eyed Susan is somehow a more sympathetic figure than the future Mrs 'Awkins. 'My old Dutch' will never put the extinguisher on 'John Anderson my Jo'; nor does the hero of 'You can't 'elp likin' 'im' come within hailing distance of 'Tom Bowling.' Say what we will, there is a spirit in these old songs which preserves them alive, for all the old-fashioned garb in which they are clothed. And between jolly tars and costers we should imagine that even the music-hall masher would not hesitate as to which make the most picturesque figures, and which lend themselves most easily to song. The coster's dialect and the seaman's quaint expletives settle the philological point between them—but not in favour of the h-less 'Enery.

What a difference, too, there is between the cheery optimism of those old sea-songs and the pessimism so fashionable at this present time! Nowadays, every one talks bewailingly of his luck, and falls foul of the times or Fate, should he but get his finger pinched by his own careless-

ness, or catch an influenza cold after sitting in a draught. But the ideal tars whom Dibdin immortalised found time to praise God, and could be cheery and merry with half their members shot away, and even snuff and a quid rendered impossible. There were no lugubrious prophecies then of the time when the black and yellow races shall be stronger than the white—when all the possessions now held by Britain will have to be given up because taken from her—when the life of man shall be nothing but a dull gray monotonous interlude between two blanks—when even family affection and natural instincts shall have died out like patriotism and nationality. Man was not proved then to be steadily degrading—we English shown by that sapient German to be the head and front of the decadence. We held our own, resisted interference, took with a high hand what we wanted, and defied 'Devil or Don' to do his worst. The former we flouted by the grace of God still believed to be working in us and for us; the latter we mentally mauled on the grand old plea of our general superiority to the whole family of Mounseers—otherwise, the Latin races. And the sentiment justified itself, as it was justified by fact. The bewailers over life's iniquities, and the prophesiers of evil days to come, as well as the assertors of our national decadence, do not seem to remember that they help to bring about the things they assert will come. Things cannot 'be in the air' unless they are put there by the voices of the crowd; and when an evil prophecy has been shouted out loud enough and often enough, it will surely come to pass. Prophecy a man's death but long enough and your prophecy will be fulfilled. And what is true of individual deaths, is true of national decadence and national disaster—to which these Jeremiahs themselves contribute.

POMONA.*

By the Author of 'Laddie,' 'Tip Cat,' 'Lil,' &c.

CHAPTER XI.

What is love? 'Tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure.

SHAKESPEARE.

It can easily be imagined what a bewildering effect the appearance of Maurice Moore produced on Dr Merridew, all the more so as he was conscious of having heard the name; but, having always connected it in his mind with a one-eyed fisherman catching lobsters, it required a thorough readjustment of all his previous ideas to realise that Maurice Moore had all along been this tall, handsome, young fellow of distinguished appearance.

And Sage's radiant face was a revelation too; it was this that first attracted his attention when she came into his studio. It was something more than a restoration of the peaceful, placid, little girl that he knew before she went to Scar; it was a new little daughter, perfectly happy, standing in the full sunshine of content.

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He could not take his eyes off her for a minute, and so he did not notice her companion till Sage's voice, with a new ripple of music in it, said: 'Father, this is Mr Maurice Moore;' and he turned round to find that Maurice Moore was not, as he had understood, a one-eyed fisherman. It took him all tea-time and the consumption of a good many muffins to get used to the idea; and he kept stealing furtive little glances at Sage, to assure himself that this little daughter of his—a dear little girl, no doubt, and, for the matter of that, a good deal better than most people's daughters, but still only little, every-day Sage, whom he laughed at and teased, whose ear he pulled, and whose opinions he pooch-pooched—had it in her to secure the friendship of such a man as Owen Ludlow; and, apparently, the love of such a young Apollo as this Mr Maurice Moore. He always felt that apologetic feeling about his children that Touchstone had for Audrey, 'An ill-favoured thing, but mine own'—a feeling quite compatible with the greatest love and admiration. It is quite comical, sometimes, to see the difficulty parents have in recognising that their offspring are full-grown men and women, standing on their own merits before the eyes of the world; they are still 'my son' and 'my daughter,' and, as such, to be modestly depreciated, as one would one's features or the colour of one's hair, though he may be a hero of world-wide renown, and she a beauty reigning over the hearts of men.

'Come and have a pipe in the next room,' the painter said to Dr Merridew, when tea was over and the children were arranging *tableaux vivants* with the vast assistance of Mr Collins's beautiful Oriental costumes, which Warren, the old butler, put at their disposal; and Sage and Maurice were examining a portfolio of sketches with long, long pauses between each, and low-toned criticisms, with heads bent close together over those artistic treasures. 'Come and have a pipe. I think you have a right to demand some explanation of this'—with a meaning glance to where Sage and Maurice sat in blissful unconsciousness of the world outside Eden.

'I think I have,' the doctor replied rather dryly.

'It was not of *malice prepense*,' the painter went on. 'I had no more notion last night of Maurice being here to-day than the man in the moon. But when I got back from your place, I found him established here. You know he was at Scar last September; and I warned him off then, for I saw he was getting too fond of your little girl, and I knew it was out of the question.'

'Out of the question?' interrogatively from the doctor.

'Well, you see he is a poor man.'

Dr Merridew's eyes, that had been fixed on his own shabby coat-sleeve and his cuff, somewhat fringed at the edge, raised themselves reflectively to the well-dressed, nicely-turned-out figure he could see through the half-open door by Sage's side; and Mr Ludlow replied to that glance, though the feeling it expressed was not put into words: 'You understand as well as I do that

riches and poverty are merely comparative terms ; and a man is rich or poor exactly in the same proportion as his expenses correspond with his income. A man with expensive tastes is poor, whatever his income may be ; and Maurice Moore has such tastes.'

'And how has the situation altered since last September?'

The painter stammered, and got rather red. Just then, he felt that he did not much like Dr Merridew ; there was a certain blunt directness about him that was tiresome, and bordered on the brutal.

'Well, it appears that the lad was rather harder hit than I supposed ; and he can't get Sage out of his head. I've a liking for the boy ; there's a lot of good stuff in him ; and when he came in last night and said, "I can't get on without her ; and I've made up my mind, if she'll have me, to chuck this diplomatic business, and settle down to some quieter way of earning my bread and butter, which won't make it necessary to spend two guineas while I'm earning one."'

'And how about the expensive tastes which made it out of the question in September?'

'Come, Dr Merridew, we're both of us getting old fellows now ; but from what Sage tells me, there was a time when you were not more worldly-wise than I was, when, with no prospects worth speaking of, I married a penniless girl because I loved her.'

The doctor granted moodily : 'I don't quite see, Mr Ludlow, because one man or even two have done a foolish thing, that it is any reason for another doing it.'

'Do you know—did Sage tell you?' the painter said, ignoring the doctor's last very sensible remark—'how curiously alike our experience of life has been in some ways?' And then he told the doctor, as he had told Sage, of his marriage and his loss, and of the baby girl, who would have been the very same age as Sage if— And the doctor stretched out his hand and wrung Ludlow's with hearty sympathy and tears in his shrewd, sensible eyes.

There was no reason why this curious similarity in their past histories should have made any difference about Sage and Maurice ; but men are so very illogical when their affections are concerned, that Ludlow felt as if he had brought the most conclusive arguments to bear on the subject ; and Dr Merridew felt more than half-convinced by them, though he still tried to keep up an appearance of disapproval.

'Well, you must hear what the lad has to say about it himself to-morrow. He has all sorts of notions of what he can do ; and I have always felt that he was worth something better than the idle society life which does not seem likely to lead to anything better. I don't know what his people will say to his change of programme ; they are smart sort of people.'

The doctor's face clouded. 'I won't have that,' he said. 'I won't have my girl marry into a family that looks down on her, and thinks she's not a match for their son. I don't mind their being poor, but'— And then he gave a little laugh. 'I'm a nice person, though, to talk in this way, when my wife's family wouldn't look at me, and I married her in spite of it. I don't know if Sage told you that part of the story that

my wife had to choose between me and her family—between poverty and wealth—between Dalston and Park Lane ; and she chose me with all my drawbacks, and never regretted it. But I won't say that it didn't give me a bad half-hour now and then, when I thought of all she had given up ; and all the more, perhaps, because she never seemed to feel it a bit. And sometimes now I get a pang on Sage's account, when I think of the difference it might have made in her life if her mother's people would have looked her up a bit.—By Jove, now ! I daresay Moore's fine folk would think the better of her if they knew that her grandfather was a baronet, and her first-cousin one of the richest heiresses in England.—But no ; thank you. I won't be indebted to them even as far as that ; so we'll keep it to ourselves, if you please.'

And then the children came in to fetch them to see the tableaux, and any further revelations about Sage's aristocratic relations were put an end to.

That was the very jolliest Christmas-day there ever had been, the boys declared, only the evening passed much too quickly. The tableaux were awful fun, especially when father and Mr Ludlow came and arranged them, and took part in them too ; and some of them were capital. They must have been good, for Sage and Mr Moore were never tired of looking at them. And then came a splendid snapdragon, and they all burned their fingers in fishing out highly spirituous plums ; and then there were games. Mr Ludlow seemed to have a never-ending variety to suggest ; and in one of these games, in which it was necessary for two of the company to go outside the room while the others were making mysterious arrangements within, these two happened to be Dr Merridew and Kitty.

'Why did you never tell me about Maurice Moore, Kit, you base deceiver?'

'I've told you heaps and heaps about him ; but you never would pay any attention. Isn't he awfully handsome and nice?'

'Then why did you lead me to suppose he had only one eye?'

'Come in ! We're quite ready.'

This summons saved Dr Merridew from condign punishment at the hands of his youngest daughter.

Supper, though the boys emphatically described it as 'ripping,' came all too soon, and though it was prolonged by crackers to an almost indefinite extent, it came to an end at last ; and then Dr Merridew declared they must go home immediately, if not sooner ; and the girls went to put on their hats, with much open reluctance on Kitty's part, and perhaps even greater reluctance concealed on the part of Sage.

As Dr Merridew and the boys were putting on their greatcoats in the hall, the doctor found Maurice Moore by his side. The doctor felt as shy as a girl at this interview with a son-in-law presumptive, and he had not spoken two words to him all the evening ; and now he did his very best to avoid it by sudden officiousness in the matter of helping Nigel on with his coat ; but that impracticable youngster wriggled out of the paternal clutches to pull a final cracker that had just turned up on the supper table intact, and left his father to his fate.

It is a great mistake in interviews of this description to ascribe all the painful feelings to the young suitor. The stern parent, who is supposed to inspire such awe and trepidation, generally endures quite as much himself, and is as heartily glad when it is over as the most bashful and palpitating youth.

'Dr Merridew, what time shall I be most likely to find you disengaged to-morrow? I hope to do myself the pleasure of calling.'

A very ungracious grumble about being very busy, and its being impossible for a doctor to say when he would be disengaged, rose to Dr Merridew's lips; but he contrived to swallow it, and to return a decently civil answer that he would probably be at home about three, and would be pleased to see Mr Moore, if he was kind enough to call. 'Confound the fellow!' he added internally—'a stuck-up Jack-a-dandy. I can't think what Sage can see to like in him; and if she says anything to me about him, I'll just tell her so.'

These were his sentiments going down the steps from the house into the street; and then Sage slipped her hand under his arm, while the others ran on in front, and he pressed the little hand tenderly against his side and said: 'Why didn't you tell me about it, little Sage?'

And she answered: 'I've wanted to ever so often; only, you know he went away without saying good-bye; and I did not know he cared; and I thought I should never see him any more.—Father, do you like him?'

'Well, my dear—— Oh yes—of course, very much. You see, I've hardly had any opportunity'——

'Oh, father!—reproachfully—'and he likes you so very much.'

'He likes you very much, Sage.'

'Do you think he does? Do you think he really can? It seems so impossible.'

'I can't say I see it in that light myself.' An ecstatic little squeeze of his arm. 'Are you happy, little Sage?'

'Happy? Father, I'm awfully happy—not just in the boys' slang; but really there's something quite awful in being so happy. It almost frightens me.'

'God bless you, little Sage.' And there being no one in sight along the street, he kissed her.

JOHORE TEA.

'WHERE is Johore?' we can imagine many people asking, who may have come across mention of the Sultan during his recent visit to Europe and America. Little as he may be known to Mr Morley's 'plain man,' the Sultan of Johore is recognised in official circles as one of the most enlightened and progressive of Oriental potentates, and as actively engaged in developing the resources of his little kingdom in quite a remarkable manner.

Johore is on those Straits of Malacca of which the late Lord Beaconsfield once uttered a mysterious foreboding on a memorable occasion; and it is now the only independent kingdom in the Malay Peninsula. In area it covers about fifteen thousand square miles, and its population is probably about two hundred thousand; and, roughly speaking, its borders are within about

fourteen miles of the British colony of Singapore, one of the Straits Settlements. It is bounded on one side by the other British settlement of Malacca, and on three sides by the sea. Yet small as it is, Johore is reputedly one of the richest native States in Asia, a fact in no way due to the circumstance that within its borders is a mountain supposed by some to be the Mount Ophir of the Bible, but which in modern times has not yielded much of either gold or tin, although both have been found at its base. Johore is particularly rich in its deposits of tin and of iron, and in its virgin forests of valuable tropical trees.

Since the Sultan Abu Bakar came to the throne, he has displayed great energy in experimenting on the productivity of the soil. What may be called the native products are tapioca, cocoa, sago, gambier, and various spices and gums, the gambier industry being chiefly in the hands of the Chinese, who now outnumber the aboriginal Malays. To encourage the industry, the Sultan has allowed the Chinese gambier-cultivators to have land rent free and untaxed so long as they cultivate it properly; and charges only a small export tax on the gambier and other products of their holdings. This is why the Chinese have settled in such numbers and have prospered so remarkably.

Not content with the native products, however, the Sultan has introduced the cultivation of tea, coffee, and pepper, with such success that they now form the chief products of the kingdom, and exceed in value the indigenous products. It is to the new Tea industry that we propose to devote a few words, because Johore tea is now being declared by experts to be superior in bouquet and flavour to the best qualities of Assam, and even Ceylon tea.

It is only within the last twelve years that tea-planting has commenced, the original plants having been hybrid Assam and China plants imported from India. At first it was extremely difficult to get suitable labour, and labour is an important item in a tea-garden, for the whole ground has to be dug over three times a year; and the bushes need constant tending. But coolies are now plentiful, and work cheerfully and well for about the equivalent of sixpence a day. The skilled labour is performed by Chinese, who, of course, are paid better.

The tea-plant needs a moist heat, and this the climate of Johore affords so abundantly that the plants flush, or throw out fresh shoots, all the year round. It is these young leaves that are plucked to make the tea of commerce. The bushes are planted in rows about five feet apart, with a space of about five feet between each bush. Each bush flushes about three times a month; and once a year it flowers, and is then pruned.

The work on the Johore gardens begins at daybreak, when at the sound of a horn, men, women, and children turn out of their homes to pluck the young leaves. The plucking is suspended at eleven o'clock, when a horn summons the pickers to the 'go-down,' to have their morning's work weighed. Payment is by results—so much per pound of leaf plucked—and each picker receives a ticket for the weight of his basket, less the weight of the basket itself. Then

at one o'clock the horn sounds again; and plucking is resumed until five p.m., when comes another summons to the go-down, and another weighing with a fresh issue of tickets.

An industrious picker can, when the flush is good, pluck as much as sixty pounds' weight of green leaf in a day, and the best baskets are usually made by the women and children.

In the factory the green leaf is handed over to experienced Chinese operators, who first sprinkle the leaves over bamboo trays placed on elevated stands. This is to allow the leaf to wither, and during this process it is to be handled as little as possible. The process of withering is much affected by the condition of the weather, and it needs long experience to determine when it is sufficiently complete. The test is touch and colour rather than time, and this is where experience is valuable, for an inexperienced tea-maker may spoil much good leaf by premature or over-frequent handling.

When the leaves are sufficiently withered, they are placed in a box which holds about fifty pounds, to be rolled either with a hand-roller, or in large factories with a roller worked by steam. The box is given a sort of sliding motion, so that the leaf besides being pressed, gets twisted and rolled without losing its juice.

The rolling process occupies an hour; and the next stage is fermentation. The mass of rolled leaf is taken out of the box and placed in heaps upon a bench, where it is turned over and over again by hand, until it gradually loses its original green colour and becomes copper in hue. This also occupies about an hour; and then the coppery, fermented rolls are spread on trays of wire-gauze, and placed in a large drying chest—called a 'sirocco'—filled with air heated up to two hundred and sixty degrees Fahrenheit. Each sirocco will hold four trays, and these are placed at different levels. The first batch of leaf is placed on the top tray, and after a few minutes, is withdrawn, turned over by hand for a while, and then placed on the second tray, while the first tray is filled with a new lot. The operation is repeated until each lot has had four treatments, and is thus 'made.'

Of course this method is only adapted to the comparatively small gardens of Johore, and would be laughed to scorn in the great tea-factories of India.

After the tea is 'made,' it has to be sorted, and here again experience is everything. The crisp leaves are turned into cylinders made of wire mesh of different degrees of fineness. As the cylinders revolve, the tea in the top one works through the meshes, according to size, into the lower cylinder, and so gradually out of that. The meshes determine the grades, which are known as broken orange-pekoe, orange-pekoe, broken-pekoe, pekoe, pekoe-souchong, and souchong, the order of merit being in the order named. Rather more than one-half, probably about sixty per cent. of a making, will be souchongs.

Now comes the last stage, the weighing and packing. If properly made, one pound of 'made' tea ought to be yielded by four and a quarter pounds of green leaf, and this is the basis upon which the coolies are paid. After the weighing test, the tea has to be carefully tasted, to detect any signs of burning, bad rolling, or imperfect fermentation.

When it passes this ordeal, it is filled into wooden boxes of fifty pounds each, lined with lead, and soldered down; but before this is done, the tea is passed rapidly through the sirocco again, in order to expel any superfluous moisture.

As quickly as the chests are closed they are branded with the mark of the garden, the description of tea, the number, and the weight. In due time they are sent to Singapore for shipment in 'breaks,' which is the equivalent of the Chinese 'chops'—parcels of given quality and brand.

Such is tea-making in Johore as at present conducted. The quality of the tea, as we have said, is being recognised as highly superior, especially for mixing with China teas. The Johore tea is remarkable for its strength, and is thus better for blending with more delicate teas than for drinking alone; yet, when freshly and carefully infused, it is delicious.

The Sultan is doing everything to encourage this new industry in his dominion, and it promises to become a very important one, for the soil and climate seem eminently adapted to the cultivation of the tea-plant. By-and-by Johore will make more out of its tea than out of its tin, hitherto the chief source of wealth.

It was from a Sultan of Johore that we, some seventy years ago, received the island of Singapore; and the present Sultan is well versed in English literature and has more than once visited Europe. He wears the Grand Cross of St Michael and St George, the Star of India, and several German and Chinese Orders. He has the reputation of being humane, enlightened, and refined, as well as progressive. His capital city, Johore Bharu, across the Straits of Malacca from Singapore, contains some twenty-five thousand inhabitants. He has a palace in Singapore, besides a couple of palaces in his own territory. He is a great lover of horses, is generous and hospitable, has a magnificent service of gold-plate, and is the proud possessor of diamonds valued at two millions sterling.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate; A Soldier and a Gentleman*; &c.

CHAPTER XL.—THE BURDEN ROLLS AWAY.

THAT evening Isabel had accorded Alan Ainsworth an interview, with the resolution to see him no more again for a long time; they were in an *impasse*, she urged; nothing could be done at present; George was in a condition in which it would be mean and cruel to trouble him; therefore, she pleaded that Alan should seek no more to see her until the situation was much more propitious.

'But, you see, dear heart,' said Alan, 'that our difficulty must remain locked so long as we keep back the key of it.'

'I know, Alan, I know!' said she. 'But, when I saw George looking so broken down with his journey, and so ashamed of his mistakes, how

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could I say what I had meant to say? To beat down an already bruised spirit!—to add a crueler stroke, perhaps, than any he had yet endured!—no, I could not do that! And then to have it thought that I had said what I had said because he is a ruined man!

'No one who knows you, Isabel,' said he, 'would ever think that! The fear of that may be dismissed. No doubt, it will be painful to Suffield to hear what must be said. But after all, my own dear, it *must* be said—must it not?—and every day's delay makes the saying only harder. And there are critical operations which it is kinder to perform at once, however ill able a man may seem to bear them.'

'I suppose there are,' said she. 'I know it is said there are.—But it seems to me, Alan, that you have not much pity for George.'

'Don't say that, Isabel. If he loves you at all as I do, I know how terribly he will feel when he is told he must give you up. It will be like the very prospect—the pang!—of death! The world will seem to end!—the whole universe to rush to chaos!'

'Do you love me so much, then?'

'I love you,' said he, 'as I love my life.'

'But,' said she, with a spark of her old spirit, 'does not a true lover say to his mistress that he loves her better than life?'

'That, my sweetheart,' said he, 'is the nonsense, the hyperbole, of love. I wish you to live, and myself to live also, that we may live together; therefore, I love you as my life.'

'Yes,' said she. 'Give me your hand, that I may feel strong. Poor George!—I am a foolish, weak woman! I never thought I was!—Did you ever think I was?'

'You are not, my love!' said he. 'This is a very difficult and trying time for you!—it would be for the strongest woman! It is your strength—your true strength—that makes you feel and behave as if you were weak!—the strength of your affections, the strength of your pity for George, and the strength of your regard for your uncle and aunt!—Another woman without your strength of tenderness would disregard or sweep away these feelings, and, in her absolutely selfish weakness, appear strong.'

'Yes,' said she, 'I think you are right!—I hope you are!—Tell me, love, I am not weak, and then I shall be strong!'

'Let me help you in this,' said he. 'Let me go to George and ask him to release you. It is only right that I should do that, since it is I who have put you in the wrong with him!—with my obstinate folly in trying to make a position before I spoke to you!'

'It seems to me very mean,' said she, 'to put you as a kind of buffer between him and myself. I don't think I can do that, Alan. At any rate let me go to my aunt first and tell her all. Don't you think that will be best?'

'I think that will be a good thing to do,' he answered.

'She may be harder than my uncle would have been,' said Isabel; 'but she is a woman, and she may better understand—especially since she was not at all anxious, a year ago, that I should marry George. I will go to her to-morrow, then.'

'And you will tell her all that *must* be told—won't you?'

'I will.'

At that moment the maid-servant announced 'Mr Suffield,' and turning their heads, they saw George standing in the doorway. They held each other's hand. Isabel's impulse was to snatch her hand away; but Alan held it, and still held it tight as they rose together to receive George. The meaning of the situation was so unmistakable, that none of the three said a word for an instant. At length George spoke. 'May I ask you, Mr Ainsworth, to leave my cousin and me alone a little while?'

'I should like to have a word with you before you go, Mr Suffield,' said Ainsworth. 'I shall be in the dining-room.'

'May I sit down, Bell?' said George, when Ainsworth had gone.

'Sit, George! sit!' she exclaimed. 'Oh, why have you come out, weak and ill as you are?'

'My father told me,' said he, 'something under which I couldn't rest: I had to get up and come to you, Bell! He suspects I have made another mistake!—that I have got you to promise to be my wife, without getting your proper love! Is that true, Bell? Answer me, dear!'

'I have done you a great wrong,' said she. 'I have committed a blunder—a shameful blunder—for which I ought to be punished. I am ashamed of myself, George, and—I have to ask your forgiveness!'

He looked on her with uncontrollable longing and pain; but he said nothing.

'I have led you to believe,' she continued, 'that I loved you enough to marry you!—I love you, George; but not enough!—not in that way!—not as you ought to be loved by a wife!—But if you wish me to keep my promise, I will keep it!'

He still had his eyes fixed on her; but he said nothing. She slipped to her knees by him and hid her face on his knee, while she took his hand. He drew his hand quickly away—it was the only sign he gave of resentment—and they remained thus silent for some moments.

'It is Ainsworth?' said he, at length.

'Yes,' she answered.

There was another pause; and then he put his hand in Isabel's: she kissed it.

'You forgive me, then?' said she, raising her eyes to meet his.

'Forgive you, Bell?' said he quietly, though there was a fevered light in his eye. 'We won't use that word. I am sure you meant me only kindness!'

'I did, George!—I did!'

'It has been all a mistake, I can see,' he continued. 'It is a good thing that this has happened now. If it had happened a month ago, I don't know how I would have taken it! I take it now quietly, you see,' he said with a wry smile.

'Oh, don't, George!' she exclaimed. 'Don't talk so bitterly!'

'It is bitter to lose you, Bell,' said he—'but, no; I won't complain! I had no business to think of marrying!—I was no more than a conceited boy fresh from school!—I have discovered I am only a boy!—not fit to be trusted with anything!—And when I am well, I am going to make a new start!—as you will, Bell!'

'And you will let me be good to you, my poor George!' said Isabel.

'For Heaven's sake, don't pity me, Bell!' he exclaimed. 'I can't stand it!—Give me one kiss, Bell!' She kissed him: now that she felt the close bond that had bound them was dissolved, she could do that without reluctance. 'It is over!' said he.—'But, Bell, you mustn't ask me to see him yet awhile!—Tell him I understand what he would say!—I don't blame him!—but I can't see him!'

And so in haste he took his hat and went away. Isabel turned to find Ainsworth in the dining-room.

'It is over, Alan,' said she, when she had delivered George's message. 'And I feel mean and ashamed. Please leave me, dear. I cannot bear to talk now!'

And he also went away, and left Isabel alone.

Next day she went again to Rutland Gate, desperately resolved to have her way with her uncle in the matter of the money. He was out—gone to see the Padiham agent about the surrender of the house—but her aunt was in her room, and sent word that she wished to see her. Isabel found her emptying boxes and wardrobes preparatory to the migration to Lancashire. She blamed Isabel for having almost frightened the life out of her, when she had found her son had gone out the previous night; and was in a generally resentful mood.

'It is strange, Bell,' said she, 'that you should not have known your own mind when you gave George your promise!'

'It was my own heart I did not know, aunt.'

'Mind or heart, it comes to the same thing.'

'I deceived myself. I thought I could marry George without the complete love you should have for the man you will spend your life with.'

'Fiddle-de-dee!' said her aunt impatiently. 'What should a girl know of the complete love you talk about?'

'The nature God has given you,' replied Isabel, 'will tell you that, if you are not too foolish to understand it.'

'No, it won't, Bell,' said her aunt—'however hard you listen. Only being in love can teach you that—if not with one man, then with another. And you have known Alan Ainsworth long enough, and surely you have known him well enough, to have understood all about the necessity of your complete love before you gave your promise to George?'

'I did understand,' said she humbly. 'But I thought he did not care for me. He was only holding back because of my wretched money, and because he wanted to make a position of his own first!—Why are you so hard, aunt? Why do you make it so difficult for me to tell you about it?'

'Hard, Bell? You talk like a silly girl! If I am hard, it is because I am a woman and can understand! I do not blame you for having fallen in love with Mr Ainsworth; I blame you for getting yourself engaged to my son, while you were really in love with the other man! It is for that I blame you!'

'I am to blame. I do not seek to excuse myself. But I cannot help thinking, aunt, that if George and I had got engaged to each other a year ago, you would have been very glad to hear we had broken the engagement off as quickly as now!'

Her aunt looked at her angrily; but Isabel endured the look, and it fell.

'You are a wicked girl to think so!—much more, to say so!' said her aunt.

'And why, aunt,' said Isabel, 'is it wicked to speak the truth? It is not always kind or right to speak the truth, but you have driven me now to speak it!'

'Driven you? Because I have said you were to blame for engaging yourself to my son when you cared for another man? Because I feel for my son when you have bruised him when he's already crushed?'

'No, aunt! It is not that!—it is not that!—It is none of these things! You know it is not! It is that you are hard and unsympathetic! You are a woman, and a mother; you feel for your son, but you feel nothing for me!—you do not care what may become of me!—And do I not feel for George? The pain of the pain I must give him has been upon me for days and days!—But you do not understand! You do not care to understand!—You are not interested in me! You never were! You never loved me, aunt! Never!'

'You were always a rebellious child, Bell!—And now you wag an ungrateful and wicked tongue!'

But Isabel was now stricken with distress. Her strained feelings had given way and produced these jangling plaints, and she trembled with the excitement of them.

'Forgive me, aunt!' said she. 'It is indeed wicked and ungrateful to talk to you like that!—I don't know what has come to me!—But, oh, you do not know what I have endured for days!—Forgive me, dear!'

She impulsively embraced her aunt, who leaned her head on her shoulder and wept.

'Oh, wicked, wicked creature that I am!' cried Isabel.—'But why, dear, why were you so hard with me? Why would you not understand how it had come about?'

And these two women embraced and kissed each other, and understood each other better in that hour than they had all their lives before.

'I must see Uncle George,' said Isabel, when the emotions of both had been assuaged somewhat. 'I wonder if he is come in?'

Her aunt made inquiry; found he had returned, and told Isabel he was waiting for her in the library.

'Well, my lass,' said he, when she had entered the library and he had closed the door.

Her self-control gave way utterly, and she threw herself sobbing into her uncle's arms.

'There, my lass!—there!' he murmured, patting her shoulder. 'Thou'rt wi' thy owd uncle, and he cannot find it in his heart to blame thee!—Though 'twould ha' saved a lot o' trouble and cryin' if things had gone straight for'ard, instead o' comin' right in this hind-foremost kind o' way. But it's come right now, and we mun be as good friends as ever. Ainsworth's a good lad; and if you love him and he loves you, you're both set in th' right way.—And George, of course—well, George has got to open a new account all round; that's only right, after all.—Well now, my lass, about this money. Sit tha down, and let's ha' it out.'

'You must take it, uncle!' said Isabel, drying

her eyes. 'Please! If you want me to live happily, you must take it!'

'Suppose,' said Suffield, 'I take the money over and pay thee a percentage?'

'No, no, uncle!' she cried. 'It must be yours wholly and entirely!—I never want to see anything of it again, or to hear of it!'

'It's queer,' meditated he, 'how thou dost hate that money! I wonder now if there was anything odd about th' way Harry got it?—However, thou sayst a percentage won't do. No.—But what, lass, if this money should be as unlucky to me as it has been to thee?'

'It won't be, uncle!' said she. 'It cannot be! You are a good man, and you will use it well and wisely!'

'I don't know,' said he, 'that that'll make any difference. Nevertheless, I suppose I must risk it.—But what the dickens,' he demanded, 'art thou going to do without it?'

'I suppose,' said she with a deep blush, 'we shall be married soon.'

'Of course, of course,' said her uncle. 'And he wants tha to g'ive this money up?'

'He does, of course,' answered Isabel.

'Ah, he's young yet,' said he—'he's young.—But what about thy father's keep at that place?'

'We hope he needn't stay longer than the year; but in any case Alan wishes to pay it.'

'And thy Aged?'

'Among us we will manage that too—Alan and others.'

'Seems to me,' said her uncle, 'that's rather hard on Alan. A man might as well start wi' a family. Howsoever, these things'll get his hand into th' way o' extra expense: they'll be o' use to him that way.—Well, I suppose, thou must ha' thy way wi' thy owd uncle, as thou always did.'

'Dear uncle,' said she, 'how kind and indulgent you have always been!'

'Well, lass, I'll take this over for two or three years. By the end o' that time thou'll ha' learned th' value o' money better, wi' one thing and another, and may be glad to ha' it back.'

'Never, uncle—never!' she protested. 'You must take it for good and all, for better or worse.'

'Well, Isabel, my lass, I never was so unwilling to do anything for tha. But thou wilt ha' thy way.—I'll tak' and use th' money till thou dost ask for it back.'

'If I am wilful, uncle,' said Isabel with a smile, 'you are obstinate. But let us leave it as you say—leave it till I ask for it back.—I am really very grateful to you, uncle! You have done me a great favour! You have taken a terrible load off me!—Just then, a beam of the afternoon sun passing by the lofty and supercilious lords of Padiham, shed its gentle, wintry radiance on these two.—It is a good omen!' exclaimed Isabel. 'Say, uncle dear, that it is!—Forgive me all the wrong I have done!'

Suffield was moved. He said nothing; but he put his kindly hand on his niece's head; and there was blessing in the act.

'How is it you two always get on so well together?' said Mrs Suffield, who entered at that moment.

'Tha' knows, Bell,' said Suffield, taking his

wife's hand, 'I believe she begins to be jealous in her old age.'

'Old age!' exclaimed his wife. 'Speak for yourself, George!'

Isabel went to her aunt and embraced her. 'You forgive me, then?' she murmured.—Her aunt's answer was a caress and a kiss.—'I will come again before you go,' added Isabel—'to see Phemy.'

And thus in mutual forgiveness and reconciliation ended the stress and storm which with minds less just and generous and hearts less tender and true might have resulted in estrangement and hatred.

BUNHILL FIELDS.

NEXT to Westminster Abbey, there is perhaps no place of sepulture of such historic interest in the British Isles as Bunhill Fields; for there lie two men who in their writings have appealed as widely to English hearts as any who rest within the great Abbey—John Bunyan and Daniel Defoe. If John Milton lay with them, whom, as an Independent, we should expect to find in this the 'Campo Santo of the Dissenters,' the spot would indeed be very sacred. He rests, however, not far off, in the little church of St Giles, Cripplegate. Yet the locality of Bunhill Fields is indissolubly linked with the closing years of the poet, and it will therefore do no violence to the fitness of things to start on a pilgrimage to the burial-ground, as the writer did, from the spot first associated with Milton, namely, Bread Street.

Bread Street is now a narrow thoroughfare of warehouses running from Cheapside into Queen Victoria Street, crossing in its course Watling Street and Cannon Street. Bread Street 'is thrice blessed' with literary associations. Here Milton was born; from this street the 'Mermaid Tavern,' haunt of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson and of many others, had its chief entrance; and in St Mildred's Church, still standing at that corner where it meets Cannon Street, Shelley married Mary Godwin. The Great Fire swept away birthplace and church (All-Hallows) of Milton's baptism; but it is known that the 'Spread Eagle,' the house of his nativity, once occupied the site of the present row of warehouses known as '58 to 63 Bread Street.' The firm who are now in possession have placed a bust and inscription in an upper room. The house is two or three doors down the left side of Bread Street from the Cheapside end.

Crossing Cheapside, we make our way up Wood Street, a street opening almost opposite to Bread Street. This, too, is classic ground. Here that curious compound of worldliness and otherworldliness, Robert Herrick, poet and divine, was born; and this long and somewhat uninteresting street Wordsworth has made musical for ever with the song of the thrush which he heard 'at the corner of Wood Street.' Long though it is, it has an end, and its end is in Fore Street.

A few steps and the name Milton Street recalls our starting-point, but only by its name. It is the modern disguise for Grub Street, the miserable warren where the pamphleteers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had their

burrows. Fox, probably the most respectable literary dweller ever in that unsavoury region, wrote his 'Book of Martyrs' here—but that was before its notorious days; he lies with Milton in St Giles, the church of which he was incumbent for a short time, where, as Aubrey says, 'I ghesse Jo Speed and he lie together.' The new name was obviously suggested by its proximity to the street into which we now pass, so hallowed by memories of Milton, Bunhill Row.

The familiar Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields, last earthly home of the poet, we look for in vain; but careful search has very reasonably identified a spot not far from this southern end of the street, and on our left hand, as the former site of Milton's house. Here 'Paradise Lost,' 'Paradise Regained,' and 'Samson Agonistes,' were dictated to the three suffering and rebellious daughters; and here 'an ancient clergyman of Dorsetshire found the poet, dressed neatly in black; pale, but not cadaverous; his hands and fingers gouty and with chalk stones.'

Bunhill Fields Cemetery, when Milton was led, blind, through the Row, had hardly become the recognised burial-place of the Nonconformists; for we cannot but think the poet would have willed that his bones should lie with those of his brethren, had he known that within a few years the bodies of the blessed dead, of John Bunyan, of John Owen, of Daniel Defoe, of General Fleetwood, and of some fifteen of the Cromwell family, would be laid to rest here. The ground, which we enter from Bunhill Row, is well planted with trees, and is neatly kept by the beadle who guards the sacred enclosure—a straight causeway, paved with broad gravestones, leading across the Fields to City Road; little gateways in the iron fence allowing the curious and the wearied to wander or rest among the tombs. The graves lie close, so close, indeed, that there is little room for flower-beds, and yet the stones commemorate only six thousand of the one hundred and twenty-four thousand bodies crowded within this little space of barely four acres. Close by was the Great Plague Pit which Defoe describes in his semi-apocryphal History. At a rough calculation, bodies must lie in strata to a depth of some ten or fifteen feet beneath the surface; for the tombs of Fleetwood and of Henry Cromwell were discovered seven feet below the surface. The history of the preservation of the Cemetery from the irreverent encroachments of warehouses and the desolating hand of 'improvement' is almost romantic. Too long to relate here, suffice it to say that the loving care of faithful Nonconformists, with the co-operation of the Corporation of London, secured in 1868, by special Act of Parliament, the guardianship of the historical spot to a Committee of the latter for ever. Closed as a burial-ground in 1852, it then completed the roll of its mighty dead; its doomsday book now lies in twenty-seven volumes upon the shelves of Somerset House, among the Nonconformist Registers. The earliest date on any stone is on that of Debora Warr, Nov. 10, 1623; but as it is possible that this may be but an instance of re-interment from a neighbouring ground, the year 1665 is probably the earliest date of a burial.

When we pass into this God's-acre, the first tombs we instinctively seek for are those of

Bunyan, and of that other great idealist, Defoe. Defoe's monument is modern; Bunyan's, the restored form of the original; Defoe's, a granite obelisk, erected in 1870 'By the Boys and Girls of England to the Memory of the Author of "Robinson Crusoe";' Bunyan's, a somewhat elaborate sarcophagus tomb, upon which rests an effigy of the 'inspired tinker,' on either side a medallion, one representing Christian escaping from the Slough of Despond, the other, the falling-off of the burden from the shoulders of the Pilgrim, and at one end the inscription, 'JOHN BUNYAN, Author of "Pilgrim's Progress," ob. 31st Aug. 1688, æt. 60. Restored by public subscription, under the Presidency of the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, May 1862.' Both inscriptions pleasing in their simplicity, and in their contrast to the fulsome legends on many a surrounding tombstone. In Bunyan's grave is buried a Mr Strudwick, in whose house, on Snow Hill, the great writer reached the goal towards which, as a pilgrim, he had been journeying during his sixty years.

Perhaps in popular interest, if not in literary, the grave of Isaac Watts would rank next. Watts lived from 1713 to 1748 with a Sir Thomas and Lady Abney at Theobalds, in Hertfordshire; and afterwards at Stoke Newington, where he died in the latter year. Like that of Dr Johnson in the house of Mr and Mrs Thrale at Streatham, the presence of this good man was never deemed burdensome by his host, though his visit extended over thirty-five years! Here he probably wrote many of his familiar 'Hymns,' although it is known, from his own statement, that he published poems in 1705. Another popular hymn-writer, Joseph Hart, who died in 1768, also rests in Bunhill Fields.

The family most numerous represented in this burying-ground is that of Cromwell. The appearance of the names, upon two plain altar tombs, of Richard and of Henry Cromwell, at first sight would seem historically more suggestive than afterwards proves to be the case. For this Major Henry Cromwell was but the grandson of the Lord Protector, son of that Henry who was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and who died in 1673, and lies buried somewhere in Cambridgeshire. It is hard to say what relationship this Richard Cromwell bore to the leader of the New Model Army; at all events, he was not the Richard who succeeded the Protector. No fewer than eleven, perhaps twelve, of the family are buried beneath this one tombstone. Not far from the Cromwells' tomb is buried a more interesting connection of the family, General Fleetwood, who married the eldest daughter of Oliver Cromwell. By this marriage, as is well known, he doubly bound himself to the fortunes of the Independents, for Dame Bridget Fleetwood was Dame Ireton before her second marriage, being the widow of Cromwell's trusted colleague, Lord-deputy Ireton. Another of Cromwell's officers, Lieutenant-colonel Kiffin, lies here in an unidentified grave, whose daughter was the wife of that Major Henry Cromwell whose family vault we have just visited. So the Cromwells and their connections fill no small space in this City burial-ground.

Amongst the names of the many Nonconformist divines, perhaps those of John Owen, D.D.,

Nathaniel Lardner, D.D., and George Burder, are most familiar. Owen, as a sentence in the long Latin inscription declares, with some obscurity as to its exact meaning, 'in divinity, practical, polemical, and casuistical, excelled others, and was in all equal to himself.' He died in 1683. Lardner's two chief works, 'The Credibility of Gospel History,' and 'Ancient Jewish and Heathen Testimonies to the Truth of the Christian Religion,' are named upon his tombstone; and as appropriate to his Christian name, the inscription closes with the exclamation, 'An Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.' Born the year after Owen's death, he departed this life in 1768. The familiar collocation of the words 'Burder's Village Sermons' is perhaps all that now perpetuates the memory of the divine who, born so far back as 1752, lived well into the year of Lord John Russell and the Reform Bill.

The surname of Thomas Doolittle, M.A., preserved amongst the twenty-seven volumes in Somerset House—for his grave is unidentified—certainly belies the man; for his sermons were of appalling length, one alone filling two hundred and fourteen pages of a good-sized volume, and in delivery demanding the attention of an audience for the space of some three hours and a half!

Of Thomas Bradbury, another divine, an amusing story is quoted in the admirable little guide-book printed by the City Lands Committee of the Corporation of London. He claimed to have been the first man in the kingdom to have announced publicly, as he did from his pulpit, 'Queen Anne is dead;' and under the following circumstances. Bradbury was a keen anti-Jacobite, was constantly dreading a return of persecuting days, and counted with somewhat indecent impatience the moments until the Protestant succession was secured to the throne of England. Crossing Smithfield on the morning of that Sunday in August 1, 1714, when Queen Anne breathed her last, ruminating sadly on the thought that he might be called upon at no distant date to prove his resolution and constancy, as the noble company of martyrs had done on that very spot, he met the Bishop of Salisbury, Gilbert Burnet, the well-known author of the 'History of his Own Time.' The Bishop, whose sympathies, as far as the House of Hanover was concerned, were quite in accord with Bradbury's, cheered the despondent Nonconformist with the intelligence that the queen had been given over by her physicians, and that he, Burnet, was on his way to court to ascertain all particulars. The Bishop seems to have been quite as anxious that Bradbury should have possession of the latest bulletin, as Bradbury was himself, and the following ingenious plan was proposed. Fearing lest Bradbury should be in the middle of his sermon when the messenger whom the Bishop promised to despatch should arrive, it was arranged that if the news was as they both hoped, a handkerchief should be dropped from the gallery by the messenger. Sure enough, when Mr Bradbury was preaching, the signal was seen fluttering down upon the head of some perchance slumbering member of the congregation; and so led to the announcement. Bradbury finished his sermon; in his closing prayer returning thanks for the deliverance of these kingdoms from the evil counsels

and designs of their enemies, and imploring a divine blessing upon 'His Majesty King George and the House of Hanover.'

The Preservation Committee have had inscribed upon the gate-pillars of the City Road entrance the names of the most distinguished who rest within. A singular clerical error occurs in the case of one familiar name, 'Samuel Wesley' appearing in mistake for 'Susannah Wesley.' The mother of John, Charles, and Samuel Wesley, and of sixteen other children, does indeed lie here, but Samuel does not. The inscription, on a very plain tombstone, records how that 'here lies the Body of MRS SUSANNAH WESLEY (widow of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, M.A., late Rector of Epworth, in Lincolnshire), who died July 23d, 1742, aged 73 years. She was the youngest daughter of the Rev. Samuel Annesley, D.D., ejected by the Act of Uniformity from the Rectory of St Giles's Cripplegate, August 24th, 1662.' Close by, across the City Road, stands the house (No. 47) in which John Wesley lived when incumbent of the City Road Chapel, of which he laid the foundation stone in 1777. He died in the same house, and his grave is in the little burial-ground behind the Chapel. It is not commonly known that under a flagstone in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey four children of Samuel Wesley, described as 'brother to John Wesley,' rest.

But the time would fail to tell of the many whose names we recognise as we wander through the grounds: of John Eames, F.R.S., personal friend of Sir Isaac Newton and Isaac Watts: of Lady Erskine, sister to Lord Chancellor Erskine: of Thomas Hardy, enlightened patriot, who suffered imprisonment in 1794 as a promoter of Radical Parliamentary Reform, but who lived to see his principles become law in the Reform Bill of 1832: of Joseph Hughes, founder of the British and Foreign Bible Society: of John Morley, whose 'high honour and inflexible integrity' were perpetuated in his son, the late Samuel Morley, M.P. for Bristol: of Hugh Pugh, the famous Welsh Harpist: of Thomas Stothard, R.A., the painter, whose illustrations of 'Robinson Crusoe' are dear to children and adults: and of many another. Two famous names we read upon the pillars, whose graves are unidentified: those of Joseph Ritson, F.S.A., the notable antiquary; and of William Blake, poet and painter. There is something in keeping with the life-history of this eccentric but inspired genius that oblivion should have closed over the exact spot of Blake's grave, one whom the world called mad.

Finally, Bunhill Fields is not without its quaintly worded inscriptions and examples of extravagant panegyric. Of the latter class, we commend the reader to the legend on the stone of a Dr Henry Hunter, for thirty-one years pastor of the Scots Church, London, as an admirable specimen. In it occurs the following remarkably modest statement: 'His best eulogium and his most durable memorial will be found in his writings, which the revolutions of years cannot efface; and when the nettle shall skirt the base of this monument, and the moss obliterate this feeble testimonial of affection—when, finally sinking under the pressure of years, this Pillar shall tumble and fall over the dust it covers, his name

shall be perpetuated to generations yet unborn.' Curiously enough, the Henry Hunter who is thus panegyricised was a native of Culross, on the Firth of Forth, and at one time minister of the parish of South Leith, before going to London. He died in 1802. The 'Sacred Biographies' and 'Sermons' published by him are probably now quite forgotten; and of his numerous volumes of translations, perhaps the only ones now known to book-hunters are the five which contain the text, with eight hundred engravings, of Lavater's 'Physiognomy,' published 1789-98, the original price of which was thirty pounds sterling.

As belonging to the quaint species of epitaph, the monument to a certain Lady Page may be cited. It contains the following extraordinary piece of information:

Here lyes DAME MARY PAGE,
Relict of Sir Gregory Page, Bart.
She departed this life March 11, 1728,
In the 56 year of her age.
In 67 months she was tap'd 66 times,
Had taken away 240 gallons of water
Without ever repining at her case,
Or ever fearing the operation.

A TALE OF THE KARROO.

ACROSS the red, sandy karroo came 'trekking' a huge, lumbering Cape wagon, drawn by a span of sixteen oxen, which were continually urged on by the 'vorloopers,' two Kaffir lads. At the front of the wagon, beside the Kaffir driver, sat James Rockhurst, a big, black-bearded fellow of thirty-five or forty, whose once handsome face was sadly disfigured with the marks of many a scrimmage, for he had lived and fought in almost every rough corner of the globe. He had been a cowboy in Texas, a gold-seeker on the Pacific slope, a stock-rider in the Australian Bush, and goodness knows what beside; but, like the rolling stone that he was, he had gathered no moss. He had been drifted by the tide of circumstances to South Africa, and was now crossing the Great Karroo in the hope of getting a job on the ostrich farm of a distant relative.

By the side of the wagon rode another Englishman, on horseback. The rider, who was roughly dressed, was young—not much over thirty—and was an average specimen of the Cape colonist, with skin bronzed to a deep hue. He was singularly reticent about his personal affairs; and although the two men had now travelled in company for a couple of days, Rockhurst knew practically nothing about his companion save that his name was David Grant, and that he was last from the Transvaal. But although silent on one subject, Grant was by no means a bad companion. Occasionally he would gaze thoughtfully over the great rolling 'veldt,' and a wistful look of yearning anticipation would come into his eyes; but on the whole he was a pleasant fellow, and as mile after mile of the rough track was steadily covered, his laugh grew cheerier, his spirits rose higher, and, unconsciously, his fingers sought oftener than before the leathern belt strapped round his waist under his vest. This nervous action betrayed him, for Rockhurst's lynx-like eye took in his every movement.

'Diamonds!' quoth Rockhurst to himself, and his eyes glistened at the thought. All that fore-

noon as they trekked beneath the blazing sun; at noon, too, when they 'outspanned' for a couple of hours by the dams of a farmstead, the word was uppermost in his mind. Mr James Rockhurst's moral code was not of the highest, and his notions of right and wrong were peculiarly convenient.

That evening, the travellers halted for the night by the side of a 'sluit,' down which trickled a tiny stream. The Kaffirs made a fire, and over it the rude supper was cooked. Then the two white men, having smoked their last pipes, stretched themselves upon the 'kartel,' or hanging bedstead, inside the wagon; while the blacks got hopelessly drunk on a bottle of 'Cape smoke' they had procured at the farm where they had outspanned at mid-day.

About midnight, Rockhurst raised himself cautiously to a sitting posture and listened intently. His companion's regular breathing told him he was sleeping that sound sleep which follows a day in the saddle; and the loud discordant snores that came up through the floor of the wagon assured him that there was nothing to fear from the Kaffirs who lay beneath, stupefied by the vile stuff they had debauched themselves with. With as little movement as possible he drew the curtain of the wagon aside. Outside, the great full moon had turned the veldt into a plain of frosted silver. The glorious Southern Cross, too, looked down upon the tranquil scene, that was strangely out of harmony with the wicked thoughts that thronged the watcher's mind. The oxen lay contentedly near, and Grant's horse stood motionless, silhouetted against the fairy background, tethered to the stump of a prickly-pear. A moonbeam strayed in through the parted curtain and played softly on the sleeper's smiling features, as Rockhurst bent over him, his hands fingering the belt that encircled the prostrate figure. To one side of the girdle was fastened a small pouch. This the marauder detached and slipped into his own pocket. As he did so his unconscious victim stirred a little in his sleep and murmured 'Maggie;' but he did not wake.

'The fool is dreaming of his sweetheart,' muttered Rockhurst *sotto voce*, as he swung himself gently from the 'kartel,' and picking up the saddle from the floor, quietly left the wagon. Stopping for a moment outside to open the pouch and make sure that it contained what he expected—a few rough pebbles, diamonds in their 'gang'—he unhitched the horse, led him carefully a little distance beyond the wagon, saddled him, and springing upon his back, quickly disappeared over the moonlit plain. All that night the guilty man urged on his beast, keeping to the track as best he could. All the next day, too, he pushed on, stopping twice at lonely farmsteads to bait the horse and procure food for himself. He was no connoisseur of diamonds, and could not form any idea of the value of his plunder, but he judged that it must be worth some hundreds of pounds. He had got a good start, and he meant to keep it. The programme that evolved itself in his brain was this: He would make direct for Graaff Reynet, at which place he expected to arrive at least a couple of days before any information of the robbery, for news travels slowly over the veldt. There he

would take the train for Port Elizabeth, leave the cars before they got to their destination, and make the best of his way across country to East London, where he could ship to any distant port whither a vessel might be on the point of sailing.

Full of this determination, he spared neither himself nor his steel, and that night drew rein at a solitary farmhouse from one of the windows of which shone the light of a candle. The appearance of the homestead did not give one the idea that the tenant was blessed with a superfluity of this world's riches. The squat, mud-built dwelling-place was small and ugly, and the kraals and outbuildings were few and scanty. Nevertheless, Rockhurst determined to stop and beg for a night's quarters. Dismounting, he approached the house, and peered anxiously into the lighted room through the uncurtained window; but the sight he saw was far from the comfortable scene he expected. On a low settle, which had been transformed into a bed, a sick child—a little girl—of three or four years of age moaned wearily as she tossed restlessly in her feverish slumber; while in a chair in front of the dying embers in the grate a pale wan woman, haggard and hollow-eyed with long watching, sat lost in that deep oblivion which only overwrought nature can give.

'Smallpox!' exclaimed Rockhurst, recognising the symptoms of the loathsome disease on the face of the little sufferer. 'Bad, too! I'm getting out of this as sharp as I can—even if I have to camp out on the veldt all night;' and springing once more into the saddle, he urged on the jaded beast. But however much he tried, he could not rid himself of the sight of that little face disfigured with the fatal blotches. Suddenly he turned his horse's head. Something drew him back to the farm. A second time he approached the lighted window and peeped in. The sash was open at the top, and as he stood watching the pathetic scene, the parched lips of the tiny patient moved and faintly lisped: 'Mammy, want a drink!'

A jug and a cup stood upon the little table; but the woman in the chair was deaf to the plaintive voice. For four days and nights she had watched unremittingly by the sick couch; now her strength had failed; sleep had overcome even a mother's devotion; and it is doubtful whether anything short of an earthquake would have aroused her just then.

'Mammy, want a drink—want a drink, mammy—mam-my!' came again, still more faintly, from the settle.

In the moonlight, something suspiciously like a tear glistened in the corner of the hardened scamp's eye as he hitched his horse to a ring in the wall of one of the outhouses and turned to the door. No bolts stopped him, and, raising the latch, he stepped straight into the little room. With clumsy fingers, trembling with a strange emotion, he poured out the cooling drink and held the cup to the discoloured lips of the little sufferer. The child swallowed the draught eagerly, and then lay motionless for a few minutes before beginning to toss and moan as before. Next Rockhurst raked together the glowing embers, heaped on more fuel, and snuffed the candle with his fingers. Then he gazed round

the small apartment, and spying a box under the table, he drew it up to the hearth and set it opposite to the sleeping woman. Wrapping up the child in a blanket, he lifted her from the settle, and with his precious burden in his arms sat down on the box. As he swayed gently to and fro, the moaning grew fainter and less frequent, and finally ceased as the little one, without opening her eyes, turned her face towards him and snuggled closer to his rough breast. The crisis was past; and, thanks to Rockhurst's timely attentions, a peaceful, health-giving slumber had come to the child.

On and on through the long dreary watches of the night the woman slept soundly; and no less securely did the child rest cradled in the arms of her rough-handed nurse. The candle burnt down into the socket and went out with a splutter, and still the man sat motionless in the flickering firelight, for fear lest he should awake his charge. The moon sank beneath the western horizon, the stars faded and the dawn appeared, and just as the rim of the rising sun became visible above the veldt, the woman stirred in her chair and awoke with a start. 'Oh, my child—my poor darling!' she exclaimed in an agony of alarm. Then her eyes fell upon the stranger, and a look of helpless bewilderment came into them.

'Hush!' said Rockhurst; 'the kid's all right. See! she's sleeping soundly.'

'Thank God!' cried the woman, as the tears rolled down her cheeks. 'I must have fallen asleep. I—Oh! how could I ever forgive myself if any harm had come to my little one—my precious Lisbeth? But you, sir—how did you come here? Are you a man or an angel in disguise?'

At this, Rockhurst smiled grimly, the woman's surmise was so *very* wide of the mark. Nevertheless, it made him feel decidedly uncomfortable. 'No; I ain't no angel, marm, as I know on,' he replied; 'I'm only a poor traveller, who saw your light, and came to beg a night's shelter. I peeped in at the window and heard the kid ask for a drink; so I just stepped in and gave it one, and thought as how I might as well stop till you woke up. So, you see, it's only by chance I happen to be here.'

'No, don't say that,' cried the woman; 'say, rather, that God sent you. Oh, how can I ever thank you and Him? If it had not been for your coming, my poor little Lisbeth might have died!'

'Now, don't you take on so, marm—don't say nothing about it,' replied Rockhurst huskily, as he handed her his burden. 'I don't want your thanks; but I'd be much obliged to you if you'd give me a mouthful of something to eat and a feed for my horse, and then we must be jogging again.'

The mother laid her sleeping child tenderly upon the couch, and then bustled out intent on hospitable matters. Soon she returned with food, and placed it before the hungry man, who fell to with ravenous appetite, while his hostess went off to rouse one of the Kaffirs to attend to the horse. While she was absent, the man's eye fell upon a book which lay open upon the table. He drew it towards him, and mechanically turned over the pages until he came to the fly-leaf, upon which

was written in a bold hand the name 'David Grant.' The cake he was conveying to his mouth with the other hand fell untasted from his lips. Good heavens! could it be possible? Was he eating the bread of the man he had robbed? Could this be?— There was not time for further conjecture, for at that moment the woman re-entered. Her maternal anxiety led her first to the couch to make sure that her child was all right. This gave the man a little time in which to recover himself; and when she turned round, he asked, with assumed carelessness, as he pointed to the name on the fly-leaf: 'That your husband, marm?'

'Yes; that is my husband—my David,' she replied, with a smile that spoke volumes. 'I am expecting him home every day. Won't you stay until he comes and can help me to thank you for what you have done for our only child?'

'No; I must be on the move directly,' Rockhurst replied. Then he added, quite casually: 'Husband been away long, marm?'

'Twelve months—twelve long, weary months,' she said, with a sigh. 'You see, it was like this. Things were bad on the farm. We had made little or nothing for three or four years. Then came the dreadful drought. The water in the dams ran short; the well gave out, and we lost nearly all our stock. That decided David. He gave up all hope of making money at farming, and determined to try his luck at the Diamond Fields. It is just a year since he left for Kimberley, leaving me and old Grierson, the overseer, to look after what little stock we had during his absence. I didn't try to stay him, although the parting well-nigh broke my heart, for I knew that his mind was set upon it. His letters, sometimes hopeful, sometimes desponding, have been my comfort during his absence. At first, things went against him; but at last the luck changed, and now all the weary waiting is over, and I shall soon have him at home again. He doesn't know his child is ill—he doesn't know how I have sat hour after hour by her side, watching the flickering spark of life, and not daring to think—afraid even to hope. But now the worst is past; little Lisbeth will soon be well and strong again; David—my David will be with us; and we shall all go to England, to settle down in the old country on the results of his labours at the Diamond Fields. Now, do stay—*do*, I beg of you. David will be so vexed when he learns what you have done for us—how, probably, you have saved our darling's life—if he cannot thank you. He will be home, perhaps to-morrow—to-day.'

Great beads of sweat stood on Rockhurst's brow as he listened to Maggie Grant's words. When she had finished speaking, he rose and paced thoughtfully to and fro across the little room, while the woman looked on wonderingly. Suddenly he stopped, faced about, and drawing the leather pouch from his pocket, flung it upon the table. 'Dash it! marm,' he cried; 'I can't stand this no longer. When your husband comes home, tell him I brought on his horse and his diamonds and delivered 'em safe;' and with these words he snatched up his hat and strode out of the door.

A faint glimmer of the truth broke in upon the astonished woman. Still, what were all the

diamonds in the world compared to the life of her child? 'Come back!—come back!' she cried, hastening after him. But Rockhurst only quickened his steps. And murmuring 'God bless you! Heaven will reward you!' she stood and watched him out of sight.

But he never reached Graaff Reynet. The fatal sickness, caught from little Lisbeth Grant, was already insidiously at work within him, and the hand of Death was even then upon him. After two or three days' weary plodding, his strength gave out, and he laid himself down upon the veldt to die. It was here that David Grant found him, and took him back in a wagon to his farm. It was Maggie Grant who spoke the soothing words of comfort that sank into the dying man's heart like the welcome rain into the parched veldt; and it was David Grant's hands that closed the glazed eyes when the Angel of Death had borne away the erring soul.

SEAL-HUNTING ON THE PACIFIC COAST.

THE greater part of the sealskins sent to the London market are obtained by schooners which sail from Victoria, British Columbia, in the spring of each year, provided with many boats and hunters, and cruise during the summer and early autumn in the Behring and Arctic seas, where the seals are killed in large numbers, often in the 'rookeries' or gathering-places on some of the islands, where they crawl up on terra-firma, and are easily slaughtered. There are, however, quite a number of skins obtained, a few at a time, along the west coast of Vancouver Island and the north-west shores of British Columbia, chiefly by the Siwash Indians; and it is one of the latter expeditions we propose to describe.

The north and western portion of Vancouver Island is about as wild a country as any in the world, consisting entirely of huge rocky mountains, some of the higher peaks crested with eternal snow, and dense forests of fir, cedar, and hemlock. It is a land of great lonely lakes, of rapid rivers, and almost impenetrable forest jungles, through which even the foot of the Siwash rarely penetrates, and inhabited only by elk, black bear, wolf, and eagle. The coast is, however, wonderfully beautiful; here and there a great mountain slopes almost perpendicularly into the sea, clothed with the dark green of fir and pine right down to the water-line; while between are to be found lovely bays, stretches of golden sand; and occasionally, in some deep rock-bound fiord, the mouth of a river issuing from the unknown interior wilderness of impassable forest and rocky peak.

The Siwash or coast Indians of the Pacific are a very different race from the Indians of the plains, and are, generally speaking, cleanly and industrious. While they do not engage in any regular labour, such as road-making, logging, or mining, they are expert hunters and fishermen; and by seal-hunting, catching salmon for the large canneries, and hop-picking, frequently enjoy what is for them quite a considerable income, and are often better customers at the stores in the small villages than the white settlers. The

Siwash villages or 'rancheries' on the coast very much resemble one another, so that the description of the one we sailed from would apply fairly accurately to them all.

The reader must imagine two high mountains running for some distance into the sea, covered to their feet with huge fir-trees; between them a deep narrow valley, almost impenetrable from the thick timber, through which a river of perfect clearness runs to the sea; and on the north bank, two or three very large one-storeyed houses, built of boards roughly split out of fir-logs, in which many families of the Siwash live, each having its own particular portion of the floor, on which the bedding of skins and blankets is spread. From the roof hang long strings of smoked salmon; and in the corners are large jars and empty coal oil tins, filled with seal oil, on which, with the smoked salmon, they occasionally live for weeks together without any other food. The men are short and broad-shouldered, with by no means a dark skin; and some of the women or 'klootchmen' might compare not unfavourably with European ladies in appearance, at all events when young. They are generally good-humoured, and always seem to be pleased with the company of white people.

Looking seaward, the Pacific stretches away into the infinite distance; while along the shore at all times there is a fringe of snowy surf. Great glassy swells come rolling in, some of them nearly a mile in length, round and smooth until they reach the shoal water of the beach, when they range themselves up into great green walls, partly transparent where the bright sunlight strikes through them, and crested with a comb of pure white foam, till, rushing onward, they curl over and break on the sand or shingle with a shock like an earthquake, and pour back again down the slope a broken mass of sparkling green streaked with purest white, accompanied by the grinding and rattling of the shingle and stones that are whirled along with the backwash. All day and all night the thunder of the surf fills the air, although a gale of wind is almost unknown on this coast, where even a fresh breeze is rarely seen.

During the spring, summer, and autumn, at least the northern coast of the Pacific, with its soft warm winds and almost changeless blue sky, certainly seems to approach the ideal of an earthly paradise. Owing, however, to the great breakers rolling in, it is impossible to make a landing except in a river-mouth or under the lee of an island or reef. Early in the morning we launched our canoe, a Siwash sea-canoe, twenty-six feet long, with about four feet beam, and some twenty-six inches deep inside. These canoes are chopped solid out of a large cedar log, and show very fine workmanship. They have a beautiful shear-line, fine hollow bow flaring above water, and surmounted by a projecting beak, which, besides being ornamental, serves to lift the boat in a seaway and to take her through without shipping any water. They are always propelled by paddles, and carry two small sprit-sails; but being nearly flat-bottomed, are not good under canvas except with a fair wind, when they can run very fast, and will go dry through a surf that would swamp most ships' boats.

There were four of our party—a white man,

myself, and two Siwash. For stores we took a bag of flour and a tin of yeast powder, some pork, tea, sugar, and a bundle of smoked and salted salmon. A large double-bitted axe and our rifles, three 44-70 Winchester repeaters, were carefully piled on top. Each, of course, had also the inevitable couple of brown or green blankets. We soon dropped down the river, and had the usual anxious time going through the surf, which, for some unknown cause, was rather bad that morning. Right across the mouth we could see three great green ridges curling up one behind another, and the chance of getting through looked a poor one. Two of us paddled on each side, the two whites, one on either side amidships, and a Siwash at bow and stern.

The first roller was a small one, and before we knew it, we felt ourselves high on its crest, and apparently carried along backwards, stern first, with the speed of an express. All the four paddles were worked like mad, and drawing away from the summit of the breaker, we flew down its steep side until we met the second, a huge and almost perpendicular wall of glittering green water. The paddles were held in the water to take the way off her, and to keep her head on, and then the writer firmly closed his eyes, quite expecting next moment to be striking out for the surface from beneath a fathom or two. Fortunately, this was not necessary; the canoe seemed to be standing almost upright on her keel, and then all the paddles again being frantically urged, we rushed safe and dry, down the other side, to meet the third comb. Unluckily, she took a shear, and instead of the flaring bow and high beak meeting the sea-end on, the comb struck us slantwise, and poured in over the starboard bow. However, the next was a small one; and not quite washed out, we stretched away into the now smooth rollers and plied the bailing can. Luckily, a bag of flour will stand a good deal of wetting without damage; the water will apparently only penetrate about a quarter of an inch, making a dough with dry flour inside.

Setting the two spritsails and shipping the rudder, we stood away to the northward, sailing all day and all night before a gentle south-west breeze. The climate here is perfect during a great part of the year, and it is hard to say which is the most beautiful, day or night. Under either brilliant starlight or with the almost daylight radiance of the moon, on the one hand the long smooth swell of the Pacific, and on the other the dim and hazy outline of majestic mountain or silent forest, the picture was one that, once seen, is never forgotten, accompanied and driven into the memory as it was by the distant roar of the breakers on the beach. At sunrise in the morning all were on the lookout for a seal; and before noon we saw a dark object motionless on the water, apparent half a mile away. The sail being taken down, the canoe was gently paddled towards the seal, which was asleep on the surface of the water; and the writer and one Siwash, each with a rifle in hand, crouched in the bow. Slowly we were paddled up until, when about one hundred and fifty yards away, the seal moved, and appeared to roll over. At once both of us fired, and our prey disappeared only to again come to the surface, splashing and rolling

about. The Siwash kept on working the 'Magazine,' much to our disgust. We could only hope that he was a bad marksman, and would therefore not plug the skin more than necessary. However, in a minute or two we were alongside, and had the prize safely on board. Then a somewhat unusual fresh breeze sprang up, and after an hour or two turned the smooth rollers into rather nasty crested seas for a deeply loaded canoe; and we were at length glad to step the foremast and run for the shelter of an island, on the lee side of which the canoe was beached in fairly smooth water and launched up.

As so far we had fed on dried salmon alone, we were glad to have a chance of making some bread. A hole two or three feet deep was scraped in the soil, and a big fire of fir-wood chopped out of the all-prevailing forest made over and in it. After the hole had filled up with red embers, and had become hot enough, it was carefully raked out; the flour, at once mixed with yeast powder and water into a dough without kneading, was wrapped up and put in; and in a short time the large loaf was ready, a good many pounds in weight. Primitive as the outfit is, the writer has never seen more wholesome bread turned out by city baker than that made in this manner by many a lonely lake and mountain in the far North-west.

Next day we again launched the canoe, and with a gentle fair wind, stood again to the north. Day after day and night after night passed, always the same soft wind, the ever blue sky, the bright sun overhead by day, and the silver moon at night. All day the shore on our starboard hand rose high and rocky; the lower sides of the hills, covered with dark-green firs, with a dividing line of white surf where the dark foliage met the deep blue of the sea, the only difference between day and night being the softened outlines and grayer colours during the latter. This was very pleasant; but as seven or eight days passed before we killed our second seal, asleep on the surface like the first, it was by no means profitable business; and as the provisions were getting low, we had reluctantly to turn the canoe's head southward with only two skins aboard. A sealskin on the animal is very different from the same made up into a jacket or mantle. In its natural state it is covered with a long and rather coarse hair, which is either cut off or pulled out by the furriers before the soft and glossy appearance of the made-up article can be obtained.

As the wind had drawn round to the south-east, and as the canoes will not turn to windward under sail, we had to take down our masts and settle down to steady hard labour, paddling all day dead to windward, and all night too, unless we could get ashore under the lee of an island. Under these circumstances, the time passed tediously enough, and no one was in the best of tempers, until, when nearly home, and pretty well worn out, one day, when driving the canoe through a little frothy head sea, a seal suddenly came up within fifty yards of her. All of us had been used to quick shooting at deer rushing through the thick bush; and the paddles were tossed into the boat and rifles grasped instead in the course of a second or two, and before the seal had time to see us, two bullets—one in his

head and the other through the body—stretched him out, an ungainly object, close alongside. The wind freshening still, and there being no place where a landing could be made, we had to steadily slave away with the paddle; and after nearly thirty hours of almost uninterrupted labour, we reached the mouth of the river we had left. The wind being partly off the land, and the surf running, of course, with us, we came through quite dry, and were delighted to stretch our aching backs and arms, and to camp at night in the then, to us, luxurious though flea haunted rancherie, instead of on the damp flooring of a rolling canoe.

As the skins are only worth from twelve to fourteen dollars each, it will easily be seen that the trip was not a great financial success; but for any lover of nature, a similar voyage along this beautiful and almost untrodden coast, with the great snow-capped mountain rising over the coast ranges, its lonely, dense forests, and wonderful deep fiords, seen under the almost unchanging blue sky, would form an experience not to be forgotten in a lifetime.

IN HOSPITAL.

In the long night-time, when the ward was chill
And drear with sleeping faces thin and white,
One lay in wakeful silence, wan and still,
And waited for the light.

And as he lay and waited for the morn,
And peered about the dim, familiar room,
The door into that glimmering place forlorn
Opened, and some one entered through the gloom—

A shadowy Shape that filled him with a vast
Vague fear; it came in silence and alone;
Mutely it glanced from bed to bed, and passed,
But paused beside his own—

Paused, and looked down, and all his terrors fled;
He grew as quiet and as restful now
As if his mother stooped beside the bed
And laid her cool hand on his fevered brow.

And looking up into its eyes but seemed
Like looking into hers that loved him so;
He heard old voices speak, as if he dreamed,
Of things of long ago.

And 'What art thou?' he asked the Shadow then,
'Who comest so like memory old and dear,
That I, who feared thy coming, loved thee when
I saw thine eyes and felt thy presence near?'

Then, in the hush, an answering whisper saith—
(His child it was that answered, or his wife,
Loved and long lost)—'This is that Angel, Death,
Whose name in heaven is Life.'

And when the night was gone, and morning shed
A sunny glory into all the place,
They came and put the screen about his bed,
And wondered at the smile upon his face.

A. SR J. ADcock.

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A DAY IN ELSINORE.

By CHARLES EDWARDS.

THE chance of travelling in Denmark in a train called 'express' was of itself alone almost enough to tempt me to take the run from Copenhagen to Elsinore. Nothing more terrible as a trial of patience can be imagined for an impetuous man than a long course of railway journeys in Scandinavia. It is much the same in Sweden and Denmark in this respect. If you fail to get into an express train—and there are very few of these—you may spend a whole day in covering less than a hundred dreary miles.

Besides, in my case it was winter. It is all very well in the bright northern summer to have from ten to twenty minutes to loiter at each little railway station. In winter, however, when you may have thirty or forty degrees of frost in the outer air, the constant going and coming of travellers keeps you in a perpetual state of discomfort, and you have no inducement to stretch your legs in these little wayside stations, which have nothing for you except a dull series of advertisements and a succession of keen draughts.

The distance to Elsinore is rather under forty miles. To cover this in a little over an hour is a feat of which the Danish State officials are reasonably proud. In Denmark the bulk of the railways are in the hands of the Government. This has its advantages as well as its disadvantages. A Government is bound, for example, to care for its subjects. Therefore, perhaps, it is that slow but sure travelling is one of the features of Danish railway locomotion, even as also the carriages are in winter kept excellently warmed. On the other hand, the fruits of enterprising competition between rival railway companies are not obtained. As a further comment upon the State influence here, it may be mentioned that the more important trains carry electric light, in the blessing of which even the lowest class of travellers participate.

Elsinore is famous for two or three characteristics. I suppose most of us on this side of the

German Ocean are still fanciful enough to think of it chiefly in connection with Hamlet and his father's ghost. Until about a generation ago, to merchant shippers it was a subject of execration because of the Sound dues, which were here collected. Both these elements of interest may, however, be dismissed from the mind nowadays. To the ordinary person, whether a business man or a seeker after the picturesque, the town appeals most as the ferry port betwixt Denmark and Sweden. There is here only some two and a quarter miles of waterway in the Sound. A man must try very hard if he is to be sea-sick in so brief a crossing, especially with so much beauty and animation around him: the gay villas of Helsingborg on the Swedish side, with their wooded knolls; Kronborg's noble castle by Elsinore; the long line of Danish pleasure resorts north and south; and the myriad of craft of all kinds—from one tonners to five thousand tonners—which adorn the blue waters far as the eye can see up and down the Sound.

As it was winter, however, with the thermometers of Copenhagen sticking at zero, I scarcely expected a surfeit of the beautiful either *en route* or at Elsinore itself. An unkind gray fog hung over the capital when we left it; the same mantle stayed low upon the snow-bound landscape on either hand of us. From out of it, once or twice, several blotches of black stood strongly, telling of the forests around the summer palaces of Denmark's king. But there was too much rime on the window of the car to allow more than a dim glance at these. I had as companion a stout, good-natured man, who entertained me with English conversation. He had been cut to pieces by a railway train years back during a holiday in which he had come from America to his homeland; and, thanks to his amazing constitution and the doctors, his trunk had survived the shock. I did not at first notice how he was mutilated, he looked so hale in the face. He was extremely anxious to be agreeable, poor fellow, and succeeded entirely. 'Now, what,' he asked, after telling about his accident, 'would

you have done if you had been me? Would you have stayed in Denmark or gone back to America?' It was an odd question, since I knew nothing of his circumstances. But on general grounds it seemed to me that for the battle of life in the States at least a pair of hands and legs are necessary; and so I commended him for his own determination. The commendation pleased him.

Near Elsinore, the train hugs the sea-shore; but on this day you would never have dreamed you were by ocean's flowing tide. In fact, there was no water to be seen. All was frozen fast, and buried beneath six or seven inches of new-fallen snow. The fog east cut the horizon short even as it severed it in the west. There was but a white level skirting for the mind to toy with. Here and there men were to be seen fishing. They had dug themselves holes in the ice, and tried for their prey with nets and long-handled tridents. Snow-bound villas with fantastic eaves and gables rose at intervals in the haze, compelled admiration, and were lost to sight. And so at length we sped into Elsinore station, which my companion described, and I think justly, as 'the most beautiful in the world.'

Here the ferry-boat was at hand, ready to plough its way through the ice-floes to Sweden. A bevy of travellers in furs boarded it; and a bevy of disestablished watermen, fisher-folk, and others stood by with blue noses to watch its interesting exodus. For my part, I was not for Sweden to-day. When I had watched the boat begin its crunching against the blue bergs, I put my hands deep in my pocket and went away to see what I could of Elsinore.

The town is a neat little place of about nine thousand inhabitants, and shows very scant traces of the antiquity it may claim to have. Its streets are cobbled and flagged, and its houses mainly of wood, with a certain irregularity of style, though similarity of windowed gables, which has a pleasing effect. The Elsinore children were sliding their way to school with reckless swing of their book-bags and with very rosy cheeks. Save for the children, Elsinore's streets slept tranquilly under the snow which covered them. I soon came to an amiable signpost which told me just what I wished to know. It bore two black, weathered arms. Upon the one was the word 'Kronborg;' and upon the other was written 'Marienlyst.' Thanks to the fog, the Kronborg arm seemed a mere delusion. For whither it pointed could be seen nothing but a fuming and stinking factory of gas and storeyard of coal. Instead of the gracious pinnacles and embellished gables of the medieval castle, there were chimney shafts, grimed walls, and doors inscribed, 'No admittance except on business.' From one of these last, a trio of black-faced operatives emerged into the purer outer fog as I passed the place.

For the present, however, I left Kronborg to itself. I was for Marienlyst, that sweet strand of villas bowered amid trees, of green meadows bordering the yellow sands laved by the blue sea, with its bosky ridge binding it close on the west, as if to keep the pure air of the ocean diffused through it. The snow was quite tiresome. It must have been a foot deep when I had left the last house of the suburbs behind me. They had gazed at me somewhat inquisitively

from these snug little white houses, as I plodded past their double windows.

Marienlyst was in white mourning. Its houses on the edge of the sand and its radiant crimson and yellow villas were thick in snow and desolate as the Pyramids at midnight. No cheerful threads of azure smoke were visible above the chimney-pots. The very entrances were flanked high with drifts of snow, and icicles of appalling magnitude hung from the gutters of the roofs like portcullises. A belated bird squeaked rather than twittered as it flew over my head; and the thin wail of the telegraph wire was heard through the fog. I saw no one in front; and now that I had gone from Elsinore, I could see no one behind. The white statues in the gardens of the Bath Hotel—empty as a soap-bubble—looked altogether miserable. Can you imagine anything more distressing to a sympathetic person than the discovery of groups of Graces, Venuses, and the like, unclothed, in the open, with snow to their knees and thirty degrees of frost pinching their woe-begone faces?

But I had not come to Marienlyst to see empty houses or the martyrdom of marble ancients. Like the rest of my countrymen, I yearned to see where Hamlet, that wondrous madman, lies interred. For the moment I was content to laugh anachronisms to scorn. Faith should overcome them, as it has overcome so many tougher obstacles. Much, indeed, should I have to reproach myself with, if, being at Elsinore, I failed—no matter what the season—to commune with this brilliant young Dane's disembodied spirit in echoing its own corporeal utterance so many centuries ago, 'To be or not to be,' &c.

I had no very exact idea where to look for the sepulchre. Chance came to my aid. I plunged into one drift worse than the rest, and in scrambling from it saw a mound beyond, overshadowed by trees. A monolith, small and smoothly chiselled, topped the mound. It was as I guessed. This pretty little pile of rockery, a few feet high, covered Hamlet's dust—the trivial remains of the inspirer of an inspired man. Upon the monolith may be read the convincing words, 'Hamlets Grav.' I hope my readers will not misunderstand me, that they will, in short, see that 'My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites.' I could not possibly, though I had strained my hypocrisy to the bursting-point, have shed the tear of sensibility here, so persuaded was I of the unauthenticity of the tombstone. Nevertheless, I was not wholly unmoved. The fancy has its own empire.

Subsequently, I bought a photograph of the grave in a shop in Elsinore. I asked the young woman who sold it to me if she had any doubt of the truth of the thing. 'Was it really Hamlet's grave?' She seemed shocked that I could even hint at scepticism on such a subject, and would have put the photograph aside for a more worthy purchaser, had I not interfered. As if to overwhelm me with evidence, and the more to pique my unbelieving nature, she would fain also have found for me a picture of the brook in which poor Ophelia drowned herself. It was somewhere in the shop, she was sure. I urged her to seek for it; but she sought in vain. 'It is a very little river, sir,' she said, as if to excuse herself for being unable to discover its photograph. I am sorry, truly sorry, I cannot put

poor Ophelia's brook in my album of curiosities side by side with Hamlet's tombstone.

Satisfied with my experiences in Marienlyst, I returned to Elsinore. At the byroad I deviated to Kronborg. The fog still held; but there were scarlet-coated soldiers on the track, and following them as torches, I soon came to the broad moat and drawbridge of the castle. A couple of warriors were in the ditch sweeping a convenient area on its ice for the exercise of the officers and their ladies. Above them loomed the nearer of Kronborg's pinnacles. The castle is a showplace in summer. There is a tariff for admission, which includes an ascent to the telegraph tower, the highest point of the old fortress. The girl who took me in hand, however, positively declined this latter adventure. If I would wait for her father—the orthodox cicerone—it might be compassed. Even then, it seemed a freak of folly in mid-January. But when the man came he showed more regard for a traveller's enthusiasm. Without ado we crossed the courtyard of the castle, its snow studded gaily with knots of gossiping soldiers, and straightway attacked the steps. But of course there was very little to repay us for our toil. The snow on the turret roof was a fathom deep and soft as pepper. The wind howled over the exposed summit. And there was nothing to be seen from it except the castle courtyard much foreshortened, and the piled sand on the seaward side of the castle, with the pallid mist wrapping sand and the frozen Sound with chill impartiality.

The chapel of Kronborg was much more cheerful to behold. Its woodwork pulpit, pews, organ, and royal 'box'—if I may call this so—of minute carving and brilliant colouring, with a predominance of scarlet, gladden the eyes. It is small but dainty. My guide bestowed a string of eulogistic adjectives upon it, and really quite half of them were not much out of place.

There are also pictures in Kronborg—a double suite of low rooms full of them. The pictures are poor things, even the historical ones scarcely sufficiently well done to allow the mind to appreciate them for the drama in them, quite apart from their demerits of workmanship.

Two features only stay in the mind as strong reminiscences of Kronborg. The one is the small octagonal chamber always associated with Caroline Matilda, Christian VII.'s divorced queen, and our George III.'s sister. If she had a soul much alive to the attraction of marine prospects, this room must have given her pleasure at times. Its outlook over the Sound and Sweden is admirable in fair weather. But on this day it sounded grim to hear that the poor lady occupied such an apartment. As well might a man be congratulated on inhabiting a cage suspended from London Bridge during a week of persistent fog. A little after we had viewed this chamber, the guide brought me level with a kind of terrace, on the eastern side of the castle, with banks of dingy sand pressing it, the sand set with trivial guns, pointed seaward. Here the gentleman struck an attitude, and with a flourish of hand that would not have discredited a real life 'cicerone' of Italy, remarked: 'This is where the spirit appeared—Hamlet's father's spectre, the royal ghost! This is the terrace it haunted, and here were the soldiers when it appeared to them.'

The announcement did not come unexpected. Still, I could not welcome it seriously. There was less here to send it home to the mind than I had found by Hamlet's grave. I suppose, however, one must treat most legends with a certain mercy. I did not therefore attempt to cross-examine my guide, but received his statements reverentially, as I gazed at the snow-clad terrace and the forbidding sand with its artillery.

Such are the attractions of Kronborg, which has now fallen from its high estate as a guardian of the Baltic, to become a mere barrack!

The short January day had already begun to wane when I had done with the castle. I returned, therefore, to the railway station, dined in view of the score or two of fast-frozen steamboats and barques in the port, smoked my cigar, and prepared for the evening express back to Copenhagen. My friend of the morning did no more than justice to Elsinore's railway station in talking of its beauty. It is a gem of a railway station—in style more nearly Elizabethan than aught else, though in Denmark they would call it Christian the Fourthian, since that monarch in the sixteenth century introduced it so largely throughout his realm. Externally, it is of red brick and white stone, having a staircase gable in the middle of its façade, flanked by a square tower, capped by a pinnacle on either side. Within, it is altogether pleasing, with its red brick walls, pale-blue iron girders, whence depend electric lamps shaped like ostrich eggs. Its very advertisements are artistically arranged, and none are aggressively prominent. The officials are in keeping with their chaste surroundings: comely men with the courtesy of aristocrats.

I ought to grieve to confess it, but really Elsinore's railway station stays in my mind as the most engaging thing in the district. It is a model. One cannot help being utilitarian. Hence I feel no shame in avowing that all Elsinore's traditions about the royal Hamlet are of weak interest compared to this excellent achievement. The architect's name deserves to go down to posterity.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XII.

You love: no higher shall you go,
For this is true as Gospel text;
Not noble *then* is never so,
Either in this world or the next.

TENNYSON.

WHAT a curiously constituted thing the human heart is! It is no wonder so many novels and love-stories are written, for the variety of effect produced on the puppets when love pulls the strings is infinite, and there is no calculating beforehand what will happen; it can never be reduced to an exact science or argued about; the same causes produce directly contrary effects, and the unexpected is generally what happens, though not invariably so; so we may not even reckon on that.

There is, however, one thing that I think is generally the case, and that is, that anything like opposition strengthens the feeling of love—indeed,

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may sometimes be said to create it. Perhaps this was the case with Maurice Moore. I cannot help feeling that if he had not hastened his departure from Scar in consequence of Owen Ludlow's representations—if Owen Ludlow had held his tongue even at the risk of that last remaining day, allowing opportunities for yet more tender tête-à-têtes, or farewell words, Maurice Moore would have gone away and forgotten all about Sage. I even go further, and think that if he had not had to get up so very early to catch the up-train—if the morning had not been wet and the walk into Shingle muddy and uncomfortable—if his portmanteau even had arrived, as it should, the same evening, instead of visiting about at various stations on the way up, and only reaching its destination at the end of three days, thereby causing much discomfort and irritation to its possessor, if none of these *contre-temps* had happened, he might not have remembered her so constantly. But he felt that he was enduring a good deal for her sake, beginning with his old friend Ludlow rounding on him, and not, he maintained, doing him justice; and this sense of injury rankled, and naturally kept him in mind of the cause of it.

And then, when he got back to Edelstadt, he found the society there uncongenial. The reigning beauty at the Embassy at the time was a girl who had 'a tongue with a tang' to it; and Maurice got into her bad books, and she used her sharp weapon unmercifully on him. She was a good deal cleverer than he was, and she made him look ridiculous before other men, and that is a thing hard to forgive. And there was a new *attaché*, whom the beauty greatly affected, and who was well off, and had expectations in the future, and a possible title; and on every occasion, this 'conceited puppy'—as Maurice, perhaps unjustly, entitled him—was preferred to Maurice, and brought very much to the fore.

At another time, Maurice might have been amused at this petty warfare, and have taken up the cudgels, and paid his enemy back in her own coin; but he had no one to back him up, and laugh over the joke of it with; for one of his special friends out there had gone to India, and another was in very low-water, and too much taken up with his own troubles to enter into other people's jokes. And it is almost impossible to go on feeling amusement at a joke, especially one with a sting in it, unless you have some one to participate in the fun.

And then, too, he was not very well; and it is humiliating to realise how much this may have to do with emotions of the heart. I am afraid sometimes that a blue pill may have a very beneficial effect on a broken heart, and a tonic prevent the worm in the bud from preying on the damask cheek. Anyhow, circumstances within and without him combined to give Maurice a disgust of his present life, of the empty round of inane society, and of the conventional girls he met there, whom he had found tolerable enough before they had begun to worship the rising sun,

and of the empty-headed men who had not two ideas to rub one against another.

So, naturally, his mind reverted to the little, fair girl at Scar, who never said a sharp, cutting word, though it was not for want of brains; for she had twice as much in her as that sneering Miss St Clair, 'who thinks herself so mighty clever.' Sage was not one of those conventional dressed-up dolls of whom you could calculate to a nicety beforehand what she would say on any subject. Sage's conversation was full of simple little surprises, always pleasant ones too; her opinions were not second-hand; they might be often girlish and illogical, but they had a quaint originality about them, and at any rate were real, and not merely for effect.

Owen Ludlow thought so much of her, too. Maurice felt that since that last evening at Scar, his old friend was not quite the same to him; he fancied his letters were cooler in tone and less frequent; and there was never a word about the Merrieweys, though Maurice felt sure the friendship had not collapsed when Sage left Scar. He amused himself one evening, when he was more than usually out of tune with his surroundings, by imagining what Owen Ludlow would say, if, for love of Sage, he, Maurice, gave up his prospects, which, all said and done, were not so very brilliant, and settled down in some humbler sphere of life, into some government office or bank, or something of that sort, and had a little house in some pretty, unfashionable suburb, where Sage should be surrounded with everything pretty and tasteful, and be perfectly happy. Of that last part of the story he had no doubt at all, conceited fellow!

And after that first indulgence in such a day-dream, he often reverted to it, and filled in details and imagined incidents, till, by Christmas, it had assumed such solid proportions, that when the chance of a few days' leave turned up unexpectedly, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to go right off and find Sage, and lay the matter before her, and to tell Owen Ludlow his plans, and ask his assistance in carrying them out.

His own people up in Yorkshire would no doubt make a bother; but that could not be helped; he was man enough to settle his own affairs, and to know what was best for him; and by this time he was entirely convinced that Sage was the best for him; and he was quite sure that Owen Ludlow would say the same.

His programme was to go straight down to Scar and talk the matter over with Ludlow, and find out from him where Sage lived. But he was saved this long fruitless journey into Dorsetshire by asking at Ludlow's club, where he was told that the painter was in London; and he made his way instead to Regent's Park; and Ludlow found him established there when he reached home after his visit to the Merrieweys on Christmas Eve.

It cannot be said that at first Ludlow's greeting to his young friend was particularly hearty; but after that prolonged sitting, which lasted far into Christmas morning, Ludlow had been talked into perfect sympathy with Maurice, into romantic enthusiasm which exceeded even Maurice's, into belief in love in a cottage and simple happiness worthy of a girl in her teens, into utter

oblivion of worldly wisdom and hard common-sense, into building castles in the air of an elaborate style of architecture rarely attempted except in extreme youth. He went to bed at last in quite a whirl of pleasant anticipations; it was so delightful to think of the happiness this would bring to his little friend. He had accused himself so often of having been inadvertently the cause of spoiling her life, that it was an infinite satisfaction to have some hand in glorifying it.

The sense of having regained Owen Ludlow's good opinion had a very fortifying effect on Maurice's resolutions, and everything combined to make him well content with the turn affairs were taking. There was something quite providential, Sage felt, in the unusually favourable aspect under which the little house at Dalston first presented itself to Maurice Moore, if it were not profane to attribute such small matters to Providence. First of all, there had been a fall of snow the very morning after Christmas-day, and all the street and houses were clothed in white, which had not yet had time to become smutty. Then Sarah opened the door in a tidy black dress, not gaping at the seams, and disclosing mysterious under garments; and, moreover, she had on a spotless cap and apron, an event almost unparalleled in the domestic history of the family. And Sage, as she gazed shyly at herself in the little looking-glass, was not displeased at what she saw, and was glad her serge dress fitted so well and was nicely made; though at the time of its construction she had had a dreary, little feeling in her heart that it did not matter and nobody cared. But even if she had never seen Maurice again, I do not think she would ever have really felt that it did not matter how she looked; there was always the feeling that the girl he had liked, even a little, ought to look her best.

And it all went so pleasantly, and father was so nice—there never was so nice and kind a father. He took Maurice off into the surgery, where they had a long talk; and when they came in, he was seized with a sudden and, as it seemed to the boys, unseasonable desire to hang the picture of Kitty in his bedroom, an operation which of course required the assistance of the boys and Kitty, and apparently took a wonderfully long time. Kitty described to Sage afterwards how father kept changing his mind as to where the picture should hang and would look best. 'And would you believe it, Sage—Nigel drove in six nails; and after all, father decided on the very first place we put it in, opposite the window. And I told him ever so many times that he ought to come down and talk to Mr Moore, and that I knew you would be awfully angry at being left all alone with him such a long time.'

Was it a long time? Sage wondered. And then they had tea; and then Maurice carried them all off except the doctor, for Owen Ludlow had by some happy accident got a box at Drury Lane for the pantomime, which seemed to the children almost incredible bliss.

It was such exquisite pleasure to have her cloak wrapped round her, and to be taken care of, and no rude crushing allowed to come near her, she who had pushed her way hitherto, and taken rubs and elbowings as a matter of course; and to feel

his hand seek hers, and to hear his voice sink to a tender tone that made the most commonplace remarks sound like poetry; and for Owen Ludlow to take it for granted that Maurice should monopolise her and take care of her; and that she should linger on their return just for a minute to say good-night at the door, while the children rushed in to describe to father all the glories of the pantomime, Dennis and Nigel being anxious to illustrate some of the practical jokes played by the clown on the pantaloons, but neither of them being willing to enact the pantaloons' part.

Sage was obliged to tell Kitty something about her happiness, when she went up to bed, finding Kitty wide awake with the excitement of the theatre. It seemed as if she must impart some of her great joy to some one of the womankind, though it was only a child who could not understand a tenth part of all it meant to her. But to kneel by Kitty's bed with the child's warm arms round her neck, and sob for very happiness, seemed to relieve the heart that was full to bursting with happy love. It seemed next best to laying her head in mother's lap, that dead mother, whom she sometimes conjured up to love and sympathise with her in trouble or joy.

Next day was quite as perfect; for Owen Ludlow had arranged a grand shopping expedition to get Christmas presents; and 'poor Sage,' as Kitty described it, 'was left behind in the studio, and did not go to any of the lovely shops and bazaars; and Mr Ludlow did not buy any present for her. Mr Moore stayed with her; so perhaps she did not mind,' Kitty added doubtfully, with a remembrance of Sage's confidences the night before, which were somehow mixed up with harlequin and columbine's adventures.

Mind? It was only too delightful to sit over the studio fire and hear all that was to be in that bright future, painted by Maurice in such glowing colours.

It was his last day; and he would have to return to Edelstadt to-morrow; but the parting would not be for long, he told her. Ludlow was going to make all sorts of inquiries after the employment that was to provide ways and means for that jolly, little house.

'Good old Ludlow is as keen after it as I am, pretty near, and he won't leave a stone unturned. He knows heaps of fellows, you know, and has a lot of interest of an odd, out-of-the-way sort. We must have a room for Ludlow—mustn't we, Sage?—whenever he likes to come up to London. I wish I hadn't to go back at all. I wish I could stop here with my little sweetheart; but I may get a chance of running over again before long; but it won't do to be extravagant, eh, Sage? I shall turn over every sixpence now. Ludlow has been reading me a fine lecture on economy; and he's quite right; and I mean to be as close-fisted as anything.—And look how I have begun! I haven't even got a ring for my little lady-love. Just think of that! Every ploughboy gives his sweetheart a ring nowadays; and I have none for mine. But when I come home I shall bring one. Even if I don't come before, I must come for the private view. I must be among the first to see my little girl's picture in the Academy. Isn't it queer that we should be in one picture before we ever met, just you and me, Sage, with little Kitty to play propriety.'

'And Pomona, Maurice.' Her voice would not keep quite steady yet to say his name.

'Oh, Pomona does not count; she is merely imaginary. Of course, I know it is Ludlow's remembrance of his wife; but I often wonder if it is really a bit like her, whether he has not idealised her out of all reality? And I also wonder, sometimes, looking at it—I have been looking at it a good deal to-day, Sage, not so much, I must confess, at the central figure, but at that right-hand corner where there is something far more interesting—but I wonder sometimes, looking at Pomona, whether in real life one could call her pretty at all, though she looks pretty enough in the picture.—But don't tell Ludlow what I say, for he would regard it as rank heresy.'

'You will not go away without saying good-bye this time, Maurice?'

And then she had to tell him all she felt and suffered that day at Scar; and he pitied and comforted her, and blamed himself, and, in self-excuse, told her all he had gone through, and the dreary start from Scar in the wet and misty morning, and how he had looked up at the window with a drawn blind opposite the 'Black Dog.'

And next day came the parting, and father—that good father, who really felt a little hurt and injured at the entire desertion of him by his former devoted admirer and slave, yet managed to give her twenty minutes alone with Maurice to get through the sweetly painful operation of saying good-bye.

'All my patients will be poisoned in consequence,' he complained; 'for I let Nigel and Dennis make up pills; and when my back was turned, preventing Will and Kitty from demolishing all my lozenges, they put in all sorts of drugs they had no business to. Well, it will be on your head if any mischief comes of it.—Bless you, little Sage!' And he took the little fair head on which the blame was to fall, between his hands and kissed it.

GALL-FLIES AND THEIR WORK.

THE drop of ink which flows from my pen as I write these words is intimately connected with the insects about which I am going to make a few remarks. For to certain of their kind we owe the gall-nuts which form so important an ingredient in its manufacture. Gall-producing insects belong to two different orders. The first, along with bees, wasps, and ants, come under the Hymenoptera; the others, along with the flies, are known as Diptera.

It is their remarkable power of modifying plants to suit their own ends which renders them of special interest. One of them alights on a tree, inserts its ovipositor, and lays its egg in the puncture. Thereupon, the vital energy of the plant is directed to that spot, and throws up around the egg a mass of nutritive tissue. This tissue serves at once as the cradle and food-supply of the grub which is presently hatched, and which remains there until it emerges a perfect insect.

Man, in order to coax the vegetable kingdom to supply his needs, has had to select and cultivate laboriously for many generations: the gall-fly with a touch, so to speak, of its ovipositor calls

forth the required result at once. Had it appeared at the wave of the magician's wand, it would scarcely have appeared more wonderful.

One of the most remarkable facts in the history of the gall-fly is, that different species acting on the same tree produce totally different results. Thus, one of them puncturing the wild rose gives rise to one of those pretty moss-like tufts which so frequently adorn it. Another on the same plant produces round growths resembling currants in size and form. A much greater variety of form is produced on the oak-tree. No fewer than fifty species of gall-fly, indeed, are said to produce their particular forms of growth upon it. One of the most common is that which produces the marble gall. This gall is produced on the twigs in the form of round bodies, soft and green at first, afterwards brown and woody. The familiar oak-apple is of more irregular shape, and prettily coloured red and yellow like a fruit. Of a similar shape to the marble gall, but softer, and of a pretty red colour where exposed to the sun, is the cherry gall. Another fruit-like gall, small, round, and often appearing in clusters on the male catkins of the oak, is known as the currant gall. Still more remarkable, perhaps, is the artichoke gall. In this case the gall-fly has laid its egg in the centre of a bud, and the vegetative growth, though disturbed, has asserted itself in a symmetrical manner. The oval body in the centre, containing the egg or grub, is covered with a series of imbricating or overlapping scales, so that the whole bears a striking resemblance to the involucre of a thistle.

Of quite another class are a number of small galls which appear studding the leaves in considerable numbers, and are known as 'spangles.' They occur in the form of little disc-like bodies, each attached to the under side of the leaf by a tiny stalk. These spangles are of different shapes according to the different species of fly forming them.

The cause of this variety in the vegetative response to what seem to us such similar stimuli, is somewhat of a mystery. When it has been said that differences in the shape of the original wound, in that of the egg and grub, in the nature of the irritant fluid injected with the egg, in the position of the wound on the tree, probably all contribute, there is perhaps nothing more to add. Or we may shelter our ignorance by speaking of the influence of the vital force of the egg. And what makes the thing more remarkable still is the fact that other insects can puncture the leaves of plants and lay their eggs without causing any abnormal vegetable growth. This is the case, for example, with the whole class of leaf-miners.

The oak responds with overflowing generosity to the appeal made to it by the gall-fly, and provides nourishment far in excess of the wants of its guest; and so it happens that the cradle and larder of one particular gall-fly are made use of by others. We have here one example among many of the curious mixture of reckless extravagance and strict economy to be found in nature. Flitting about among the branches of the oak-tree are countless myriads of flies on maternal thoughts intent, which have nevertheless no power of inducing the oak to provide galls for them. But here are the marble galls produced by another species forming a ready-made supply

of nourishment of the right sort. Piercing the excrescences with their ovipositors, they deposit therein their eggs and depart. The young are hatched, and feed on the substance of the gall without damage to the rightful owner—there is food sufficient and to spare for all. The rightful owner is indeed fortunate if nothing further happens to him than this feeding on his preserves without doing him bodily injury or starving him. For there are other and more dangerous flies flitting about the oak-tree. Glittering in green and gold array, and armed with long ovipositors, they also are looking out for places to deposit their eggs; and the only place that will do is the *body* of the fat grub lying in the centre of the marble gall. Hence it is woe to the original possessor when one of these gay hoverers chooses its gall. With its long ovipositor, the fly pierces the gall, and places its egg *within* the body of the grub inside. An exceedingly common tragedy in nature is played out within the narrow stage of the oak-gall. The second comers to the gall—the harmless ones—are likewise subject to their own proper parasites, and may be made the unwilling receptacles of their eggs. And then the nutritious mass of the gall proves acceptable to caterpillars of various small moths, while beetles, bees, and wasps may avail themselves of it as a shelter. Thus many species of insects may be found in an old oak gall. An enthusiastic naturalist once counted the different species in one of them, and they amounted to forty-three! These included six species of small moths, seven beetles, and the rest saw-flies, gall-flies, ichneumon flies, mason wasps, bees, &c.

The marble gall is properly inhabited, as we have seen, by a single grub; but the fly which causes the growth of the oak-apple lays several eggs. These are contained in a group of hard woody cells near the centre of the gall, the rest of which is soft. The soft part is frequently eaten by insects, or torn away by birds in search of the grubs; and the hard cells remain on the tree, where, along with the hard brown marble galls, they may be seen during the winter months.

The life-history of the insects inhabiting the spangles on the oak-tree leaves is of peculiar interest. It furnishes us with an example of what is known to naturalists as alternation of generations, and of parthenogenesis. Two distinct forms of gall-fly were formerly described as different species—they were even placed in different genera. One of them is found inhabiting the currant galls, and the other in one form of the spangles. Some fifteen years ago it was shown by Dr Adler that they were two different stages of the same species of gall-fly; and the discovery has since been confirmed by others. These two forms, so distinct as to be ascribed by naturalists to different genera, proceed the one from the other by direct generation: the children are totally different from their parents, but the grandchildren resemble them. This is termed alternation of generations. In May a little gall-fly lays its eggs on the leaves or male catkins of the oak, and the currant gall is produced. Development is rapid; and from this gall issue male and female flies. After mating, the females pierce the oak-leaves and lay their eggs. But

instead of a second crop of currant galls, there appear spangles. This takes place in the autumn. After a while the spangles become detached from the leaves and fall to the ground; there they swell, and the further development of the larva takes place. In the spring, there issues a fly perfectly distinct from the one which laid the eggs on the leaf and produced the spangles; and, strange to say, they are all females: no males appear among them. Yet these females puncture the oak-tree, and lay their eggs to produce another crop of currant galls, as their grandparents did, but not their parents, which produced spangles. From these currant galls issue male and female flies as before.

Other trees and plants are liable to the attacks of gall-flies. In late summer and autumn, the willow bushes are often seen covered with pretty red fruit-like bodies adhering to the backs of the leaves. These are also galls. Less symmetrical and beautiful are the effects of gall-flies on more lowly plants like wild thyme and speedwell, on which they take the form of irregular swellings and distortions of the stems and leaves. Probably, indeed, the possession of a peculiar gall fly or flies is the rule rather than the exception among plants.

The influence of man on vegetation has been deep and far-reaching: nature has responsively ministered liberally to his needs and his sense of beauty. Yet the wild rose, yielding to his prolonged efforts the 'Gloire de Dijon' and the 'Baroness Rothschild,' is less of a wonder than the same bush bursting out into mossy tufts and round berries under the influence of insects; the Chinese oak, a hundred years old, growing in a small pot, has less of the marvellous than that one in the hedgerow responding to the punctures of thousands of its tiny guests, and covering itself with oak-apples, marble galls, spangles, &c., to supply them with food.

THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.*

CHAPTER XLII.—DISSOLVING VIEWS.

THUS Isabel stepped from her proud position as the courted heiress, and divested herself of her 'gold and jewels,' her 'silver and pearls.' When her aunt took her departure for Lancashire—Mr Suffield having still to remain in town for a day or two—Isabel met her at the station with a small box, which she enjoined her aunt to take great care of and not to open till she was in her own North. That box contained the jewellery of rare foreign workmanship which Uncle Harry had left: so resolved was she to be rid of all she could be rid of that had belonged to Uncle Harry. She tried to be rid also of the furniture and other things that had been bought with Uncle Harry's money; but Ainsworth had thought it was a pity that her pretty home should be broken up, and he had suggested a compromise. He had gone to Mr Suffield and proposed himself to pay for the things. But Suffield had been so angry at the suggestion, and had so obstinately declared that if he heard any

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more of it he would have nothing to do with the money at all, that the matter was allowed to drop. Then Isabel sweetly asked Ainsworth why the flat should be given up: would it not do as a dwelling for both of them?

'And then,' said she, 'then I shall feel as if I had brought you something—a very little something!—besides myself and the cares I took upon myself.'

And then Ainsworth, greatly daring, asked, since the dwelling was ready and since she was now—or soon would be—a mere spinster without an income, why they should not prepare to join hands and purses as soon as possible?

So it came to pass that an early day in spring was fixed for their wedding. Isabel went to see her father with the uncertain design of asking him to perform the usual office of a father on such an occasion, and 'give her away;' but his sequestered life on the Surrey hills seemed so serene, he was so occupied with his 'Defence of Transcendentalism,' and he showed so remote an interest in what she told him of herself, that she thought it was a pity to disturb his equable leisure.

'I am delighted to hear it, my child,' said he. 'Marriage, with love, is the completing of a woman; so she fulfils the law of her being. You should read Luther on marriage, my dear. He has given the most beautiful picture of the nature and ends and duties of the wedded life you are ever likely to read.'

That was all he said; and so he turned again to his 'Defence of Transcendentalism.' Isabel, therefore, turned to her uncle: who but he—the kind and indulgent nourisher of her youth and friend of her maturer years—her all but father—should give her away? He was asked, and at once agreed, to perform the paternal office; and so Isabel went down to Lancashire to fulfil the time before her wedding, for she desired to be married from her uncle's house.

Meanwhile Mr Suffield had been getting through the business for which he stayed behind in London. He had arranged with the whip of his party to pair for the session and then to resign his seat. One important division he could not be paired for, and he remained a day or two longer than he had intended, to perform his duty to his party. There was another debate on Indian affairs—it concerned Opium this time—and his secretary, the Tame Philosopher, had prevailed on him to make a speech. He had written for him a most learned discourse, packed with words of the peculiarly Tame-Philosophic kind. Suffield sat down for a little in the Library of the House of Commons and wrinkled his brows over the sheets, but his thoughts would wander after his family and his affairs into Lancashire.

'I can make nought o' this!' he said, and rose, folding the sheets away in his pocket.

He went down into the House, and promising himself that he would not miss the night-train home, he sat and listened in a half-dazed condition to the droning and the buzzing, and grew weary of it all. One of the whips of his party came to him and asked him if he meant to carry out the desire he had expressed to speak on the question.

'Nay,' said he; 'I ha' nought to say. But I'll vote.'

Still he sat, and still the debate drawled and mumbled on—with an occasional screech or two—till eleven o'clock struck. There was no sign that the division was at hand; and he went to the whip and begged that he might be paired for the division, because he must hurry down to Lancashire on business. The whip looked coldly on him, but acceded to his request; and Suffield walked out of the House never to enter it again.

In the lobby he encountered the Tame Philosopher, hanging about in expectation of hearing his own rhapsodical and bombastical periods delivered by his patron.

'You are not going away!' he exclaimed in dismay.

'I am,' answered Suffield, cramming his oration into his hands. 'Thou'rt th' only man that can fitly deliver that fine composition. Keep it, my friend. This question, if I'm not mistaken, 'll come up again, and then thou mayst be in th' House thyself, and canst deliver it!'

He drove away to the station—he had brought his travelling bag to the House—and caught his train to the North. He entered a sleeping-carriage, and quickly put himself to bed. And as the train rolled away through the soft night, charged with premonitory whiffs and whispers of spring, the unbidden refrain kept rolling through and through his mind:

O the oak, and the ash, and the bonny birken tree,
They're all growing green in my ain countree.

And at length he went to sleep, to awake in his own Lancashire.

And so the interest of our story fades from London; for the Tame Philosopher soon followed his patron back to the North—he could not live, he declared, 'without the solace of seeing my dear George Suffield, a true man's-a-man-for-a-tha'—and Doughty's existence was regularly merged now in Ainsworth's, the interest of whose life was now in Lancashire. Gorgonio was heard of no more; and as for Tanderjee and the blameless Daniel they had fitting punishments meted out to them at the Lancashire spring assizes for felony and for obtaining money on false pretences.

But before we say adieu to the excellent family that has largely figured in this story, let us see how they were affected by the revolution in their circumstances. They dwelt no longer in the noble old Holdsworth Hall: that had been let to a Dutch-German-French Jew who gambled successfully on the Stock Exchange. They lived in a modest, old-fashioned house on the border of the village which Suffield had built, George having rooms of his own in town, to be always in supervision of the City part of the business.

Isabel—who lived in her uncle's house till her marriage—could not but note with delight how he and her aunt renewed their youth. Both might have been held somewhat excused if they had expressed or shown regret for their lost wealth and position, and resentment against the necessity for returning to work, when they had thought that work was over, according to the doleful habit of people who have been 'reduced;' but neither of them behaved as the foolish people behave. They were busy, cheery, and harmonious by day, and by night they were wrapped

in the peaceful and profound sleep of the just and merciful. Suffield was up and into the works as early in the morning as his work-people; and Mrs Suffield was up not much later, and with her daughter and her maid-of-all-work setting her house in order and preparing breakfast. It was to Isabel a delightful and stimulating lesson in life to see how her aunt, the courageous, vigorous-minded woman who had held her own with duchesses and female politicians in 'the gilded saloons of greatness,' shone with all the virtues of the house-mother in the little Lancashire home, and was evidently at peace with herself and with the world.

'Of such,' thought Isabel, 'must be the women who have made Englishmen great with their peculiar quality of greatness!'

And it was not at home only that her aunt was active and helpful; she was also helpful and active in the village among her husband's people; for Suffield was not one of those employers who consider that their responsibility for their workers is at an end with the payment of their weekly wages. There were particularly gaffers and gammers upon whom the cold of Death was gradually creeping while yet they lived, who needed such comfort and encouragement as a wise woman can best impart: cheering words, and comforting food and drink. Isabel knew these pensioners from of old, who had so long benefited by the Suffield bounty that they had come to think they had a prescriptive right to the care of 'th' mester,' as most people think they have a right to the regard of Providence. Isabel went among these ancient, quaint creatures, alone sometimes, and then she heard how her uncle and aunt were regarded by them.

'Aw'm real glad,' said one gray gaffer to her, who was ancient enough to wear knee-breeches and coarse stockings, 'th' missus ha' come back—though they do say as how it's because th' mester ha' lost lots o' brass. Brass or no brass, hoo [she] is a rare un to mak' broth.—I set on my lass and owd Betsy to try to mak' th' broth; but, bless thee! they conna mak' it nohow.—Aw reckon th' missus has a special kind o' barley.'

Of 'th' mester' she heard more sympathetic commendation still. She visited an old woman supposed to be dying, who had in her time worked very hard and borne a large family of great sons, and who had known 'th' mester's' mother.

'Ay, aw knowed th' mester's mother,' said she to Isabel, while an attentive neighbour sat by—'as clean and nate a woman as could be, and as bonny and free-handed as th' mester himsen. When aw sit down i' th' Kingdom o' Heaven, aw'll ha' a good look round for th' mester's mother, to tell her how well th' mester's going on. Happen, aw'll clap e'en on her sitting right again' me; for we're fro' th' same village.'

'Happen,' said her neighbour, almost as old and quaint a creature as herself—'happen thou'll giv' a look round and find out my owd John and tell him about Betsy.'

'Nay,' said the other; 'aw'll do nought o' th' sort!—Trapesing round to look for thy owd John! When aw get to th' Kingdom, aw'll just put me on a clean apron, and sit me down in th' first cheer, and rest me!—But aw'll look out for th' mester's mother!'

Thus work, peace, and contentment reigned in the Suffield home and throughout the village which Suffield had created and which depended on him. The only person who seemed at all sad and who occasionally sighed was Euphemia. And it presently became evident what was troubling her: not reduced circumstances, not the necessity of putting on an apron and performing the duties of a parlour-maid, but because her 'Beast' seemed to have ridden away, and because since she had not seen him her mind turned him into a Prince. When her father had to announce to Lord Clitheroe their contracted circumstances, she bravely—but with no terrible pang of heart—offered Clitheroe his liberty. He refused to accept it, although he anticipated that his father and mother would strongly object to his carrying out his engagement; he declared, however, he would wait and 'lie low'—by which he meant 'bide his time'—until the not very distant day when his invalid old father must slip out of the title and estates. From that day, Phemy had not seen or heard from her 'Beast,' and she began to think he must have ridden away indeed. Then, since she had not seen him dancing attendance on her, she had begun to long for his presence, and at length to be convinced that she loved him and was going to lose him—such being the wayward fashion of love with maidens of Euphemia's character.

But on a certain day a tall horseman with a big flaming-red beard, and a piece of crape on his arm, rode up to the Suffield door and alighted. It was the 'Beast-Prince' come to claim his bride: his old father was dead, and he had stepped into the empty shoes and inherited the empty title, and by right of his freedom now to do as he pleased, he had come to his lady-love. Euphemia welcomed him with more demureness and at the same time with more fervour than she had ever before shown.

'Well, little one,' said he, 'you see I've come, now that I am free to do as I like.'

'I see you have come,' said she, with something of her old sauciness: 'you are a very noticeable fact;' but she refrained from calling him 'Beast' or 'Goose.'

'Come now,' said he; 'have you missed me at all? Tell me.'

'A little,' she answered: 'not much.' But her look was better than her words.

They were closeted together for a little, and then they came forth radiant. The new Earl of Padiham congratulated Isabel on her approaching marriage—of which, he said, he had just heard—and regretted that his own could not be celebrated at the same time. And so he rode away, and left Phemy as merry as a bird in the waking of dawn.

So almost before Isabel was aware—with these events and with preparations for the wedding—her marriage day was at hand. It seemed to suddenly leap out of the future into the present! Three days before it seemed still very distant; two days before it seemed only one day nearer than it had been the day before; then the gulf seemed to contract and disappear, and lo! they were at the morning of the very day, and Ainsworth was by her side!

George was absent: he had gone for a holiday; but he wrote a manly letter to Isabel, begging her

to believe that he stayed away from her wedding because of no feeling of estrangement, but only because he thought that his presence might embarrass the whole party. And with that he wished her and her husband—about to be—'happiness and prosperity.' The letter was simple and honest, and strove hard to be rid of all trace of self-pity or wounded vanity.

Suffield had declared a holiday at the works on the wedding day; and there was a great concourse in the church on that August morning, when the worthy man with tears in his eyes gave his niece away, and anon greeted her as 'Mrs Ainsworth.' But the most notable fact in connection with the wedding is that Mrs Suffield's wedding present to her niece was that very box, containing Uncle Harry's jewels and trinkets, which Isabel had turned over to her aunt not many weeks before.

And then—and then the married pair drove away into the new life which lay before them—the life of husband and wife, with its new cares and new burdens, its new duties and new responsibilities.

THE END.

OUTPOST DUTY AND 'SECRET SERVICE' IN WAR.

On the 19th of October, 1886, Lord Wolseley, by direction of the Commander-in-chief, issued a Memorandum to the general officers commanding military districts, in which it was pointed out that the Duke of Cambridge had recently noticed that 'many officers of all ranks evinced a considerable lack of information in those field-duties, such as outpost and reconnaissance work, a thorough and practical knowledge of which is vitally important to all military efficiency.' The Memorandum recalls that the yearly course of military training prescribed by the Queen's regulations was laid down with the object of affording officers sufficient opportunities of practising these duties and teaching them to their men; and that the Commander-in-chief had been disappointed to find that little progress had been made in this respect. The general officers addressed were ordered to impress upon officers commanding regiments or battalions that the Commander-in-chief held them personally responsible for the efficiency of their corps in every particular. The necessity of devoting a great deal more time and attention to the instruction of troops, especially in field-duties—'upon the proper and intelligent performance of which, in time of war, the credit of corps and the lives of men must in no small measure depend'—is very strongly insisted upon. Finally, the officers commanding the districts are requested themselves to see that corps under their command were frequently practised in outpost and reconnaissance duties.

The gravity of this severe rebuke will be understood when we consider the nature and duties of outposts. They act as the *feelers* of an army, it being their office to guard it from every danger, and keep it constantly informed of everything that can add to its safety or assist its move-

ments. It is their business to screen the movements of the army in their rear, and prevent any intelligence of its movements from reaching the enemy. The outposts thrown out to the front, to the flanks, and, when necessary, in the rear of a force in the field for its protection, are known in our service as 'outlying piquets;' whilst for reconnaissance duties we use patrols, varying in strength according to circumstances. All outposts should be as far in advance of the force they are thrown out from as they can be with safety; that is, without exposing them to be cut off or overpowered before assistance can reach them. A great military authority says that, 'as a general rule, five-sixths of a force should be able to rest in peace and quiet, whilst to the remaining one-sixth is allotted the outpost work. It is essential that they should be sufficiently far to the front to enable the Commander-in-chief, when he receives the report from them that the enemy is advancing in force, to make up his mind whether he will or will not fight; and if he decides upon fighting, to enable him to occupy the position he had previously selected to fight in, before the enemy could disturb him in the movements necessary for that purpose.'

Ignorance of outpost duty was a distinguishing feature of our officers in the Crimean War. It accounts for the blindness and feebleness with which Lord Raglan groped his way forward towards Sebastopol after the battle of the Alma. It is now known that he might have marched into the practically unfortified northern side, in the September of 1854, instead of besieging it, at an immense cost of blood and treasure, from the south side during two long and trying winters. The greatest possible attention is given to the efficient performance of outpost duty in the armies of Germany, Austria, and France, every officer, whether of cavalry or infantry, being made to study General de Brack's 'Light Cavalry Outposts,' which, although the work of one of Murat's old officers, is still accounted the best authority on the subject.

The most reliable method of obtaining information of an enemy's movements is by reconnaissances, which may be divided into four classes: (1) Reconnaissances in force, always conducted under or by order of the Commander-in-chief. (2) Those made by a detachment of all arms, of sufficient strength to protect themselves and secure their retreat. (3) Those made by staff officers, accompanied by small cavalry detachments; and (4) and last, those which are continually made by individual officers from the outposts.

One of the admirable light-cavalry officers of Napoleon, who distinguished himself in the third of these divisions, was Curély—Sous-lieutenant in 1807, and General in 1813—whose name I have not succeeded in finding in any civil or military biography. In 1806, says De Brack, Curély, 'being twenty leagues in advance of the army, at the head of twenty of the French 7th Hussars, carried terror into Leipsic, where were three

thousand Prussians. In 1809, when fifteen leagues in front of the division to which he belonged, and at the head of one hundred chasseurs and hussars of the 7th and 9th, he passed unperceived through the Austro-Italian army, which he was engaged in reconnoitring, and penetrated to the centre of the staff of the Archduke, the Commander-in-chief. In 1812, at Solosk, at the head of one hundred chasseurs of the 20th, he carried off twenty-four guns from the enemy, and took prisoner the Commander-in-chief of the Russian army. When services such as these can be rendered by a Sous-lieutenant of cavalry, the reader may understand the significance of the 'Memorandum' issued by Viscount Wolseley.

I think we may match Curly or any of the officers mentioned in General de Brack's work with the celebrated Colquhoun Grant of the Peninsular War. It was of Grant, as an 'exploring officer,' that Wellington said that 'no army in the world ever produced the like.' When Marmont came down on Beira in 1812, and was supposed to contemplate a *coup de main* against Ciudad Rodrigo, Wellington sent Grant to watch him. Attended by Leon, a Spanish peasant of fidelity and quickness of apprehension, who had been his companion on many occasions of the same nature, he arrived in the Salamanca district, passed the Tormes in the night, and remained in uniform—for he never assumed any disguise—three days in the midst of the French camp. He obtained exact information of Marmont's object, and more especially of his preparation of provisions and scaling-ladders, notes of which he sent to headquarters from hour to hour by Spanish agents. On the third night some peasants brought him a general order addressed to the French regiments, saying the notorious Grant being within the circle of their cantonnements, the soldiers must use their utmost exertions to secure him, for which purpose also guards were placed in a circle round the army. Nothing daunted, he consulted with the peasants, and before daylight next morning entered the village of Huerta, close to a ford on the Tormes, and six miles from Salamanca. A battalion was in Huerta; and beyond the river, cavalry videttes were posted, two of which constantly patrolled backward and forward for the space of three hundred yards, meeting always at the ford. When day broke, the French assembled on their alarm post, and at that moment Grant was secretly brought opposite the ford, he and his horse being hidden by the gable of a house from the infantry, while the peasants standing on loose stones and spreading their large cloaks covered him from the cavalry. There he calmly waited until the videttes were separated the full extent of their beat, when he dashed through the ford between them, and receiving their fire without damage, reached a wood, where the pursuit was baffled. Leon being in his native dress, met with no interruption, and soon rejoined him.

He had before this ascertained that means to storm Rodrigo were prepared, and the French officers openly talked of that operation; but to test that project, to ascertain Marmont's real force, and to discover if he was not really going by Perales to the Tagus, Grant now placed himself on a wooded hill near Tamames where the road branched off to Perales and to Rodrigo. There lying perdué until the French passed by in

march, he noted every battalion and gun; and finding all moved towards Rodrigo, he entered Tamames, and discovered they had left the greatest part of their scaling-ladders behind, thus showing the intention to storm was not real. This it was which allayed Wellington's fears for that fortress.

As a purveyor of intelligence, Colquhoun Grant was of more use to the British army in the Peninsula than all the cavalry officers under Sir Vincent Cotton, Lord Uxbridge, and Lord Edward Somerset put together. His unrivalled mastery of French and Spanish, both of which he spoke 'like a native,' enabled him to penetrate wherever he pleased. Scorning to wear any disguise, he would often spend days in the French camp wearing the British uniform, which his unsuspecting comrades supposed he had picked up on the battle-field and substituted for his own. His adventures were extraordinary; but it would be manifestly out of place to follow them in the present paper.

In the Austrian wars of Napoleon, the French bivouacs were sometimes visited by Jews, who asked leave to purchase the skins of animals slaughtered for the soldiers' food. These men were spies, a 'secret service' which renders invaluable assistance to the general in time of war. Wellington had numerous spies within the French lines, even at the headquarters of Marshal Victor. The greater number were Spanish gentlemen, alcaldes, and poor men who disdained rewards, disregarded danger, and were distinguished by their boldness, their talent, and their integrity.

But the spies I have especially in my 'mind's eye' were officers—English and French—of singular boldness and sagacity—such as John Grant, Major in the Portuguese service, often confounded by the French—especially by Marmont—with Colquhoun Grant, already alluded to. It is to be regretted that the adventures of this ill-requited officer, who was allowed by the English War Office to die in sordid poverty and neglect, were never preserved, for they must have been indeed extraordinary. Men of this sort carry their lives in their hand, for, by the laws of war among all civilised nations, a proved spy is summarily put to death.

As a fitting conclusion to this subject, I give the following on the authority of the late General Cavalié Mercer, Royal Artillery, 9th Brigade, at that time captain of a troop of horse artillery. It occurs in his 'Journal of the Waterloo Campaign.' 'It was on the evening of the 15th of June (1815), and about sunset, or a little later, that an officer of hussars rode into the little village of Yseringen, Leathes [an officer of horse artillery] being at the time at dinner with me at our château. He was dressed as our hussars usually were when riding about the country—blue frock, scarlet waistcoat laced with gold, pantaloons, and forage-cap of the 7th hussars. He was mounted on a smart pony, with plain saddle and bridle; was without sword or sash, and carried a small whip—in short, his costume and appearance were correct in every particular. Moreover, he aped to the very life that "devil-may-care" nonchalant air so frequently characterising our young men of fashion. Seeing some of our gunners standing at the door of a house, he desired them to go for their officer, as

he wished to see him. They called the sergeant, who told him that the officer was not in the village. In an authoritative tone he then demanded how many men and horses were quartered there, whose troop they belonged to, where the remainder of the troop was quartered, and of what they consisted. When all these questions were answered, he told the sergeant that he had been sent by Lord Uxbridge to order accommodation to be provided for two hundred horses, and that ours must consequently be put up as close as possible. The sergeant replied that there was not room in the village for a single additional horse. "Oh, we'll soon see to that," said he, pointing to one of the men who stood by. "Do you go and tell the *maire* to come instantly to me." The *maire* came, and confirmed the sergeant's statement; upon which our friend, flying into a passion, commenced in excellent French to abuse the poor functionary like a pickpocket, threatening to send a whole regiment into the village; and then, after a little conversation with the sergeant, he mounted his pony and rode off just as Leathes returned to the village. Upon reporting the circumstance to the officer, the sergeant stated that he thought the man had appeared anxious to avoid him, having ridden off rather in a hurry when he appeared, which, together with a slight foreign accent, then for the first time excited a suspicion of his being a spy, which had not occurred to the sergeant before, as he knew there were several foreign officers in our hussars, and that the 10th was actually then commanded by one, Colonel Quentin. The suspicion was afterwards confirmed; for, upon inquiry, I found that no officer had been sent by Lord Uxbridge on any such mission. Our friend deserved to escape, for he was a bold and clever fellow.

PHYLLIS MARSDEN'S LOVE-POEM.

By LOUIS HAMILTON.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

THE Marsdens had lived in the same house a long time, a very long time. About that there could be no dispute, seeing that three generations of Marsdens had been born and had died there. It was preposterous, the fourth Phyllis argued within herself, as she stood flattening her pretty nose against the window of her own sitting-room, on which the rain beat so thickly as almost to obscure the pleasant view of an old-fashioned garden below—it was nothing short of ridiculous folly to suppose that a house which was good enough for the Marsdens in 1780, when, as all the world knows, they first set up their great pottery in Stockwell, could be a suitable dwelling-place for that same family when a hundred years of prosperity had brought distinction to it in a dozen different ways.

It was roomy enough, of course! 'Bless me!' reflected Phyllis, with a shrug of impatience, 'that is not the drawback! There are half-a-dozen rooms, I daresay, that I have not entered since I was a child—damp, nasty, dusty places. If I had my way, I should pull down half the house; and cut all the living-rooms in two by building walls

across them. Then we might be comfortable. At least we should have one room, one climate; and not change torrid heat for Siberian winter every time we get up from our chairs to fetch a reel of cotton.'

She drummed on the glass with her fingers, and in a few minutes broke out again.

'There are Kate and Evelyn at the Deanery, as comfortable and jolly as possible, always going out to balls and tennis parties, and—and—things. And Georgie's life just makes me rampant when I think of it, with half her father's regiment always sending her flowers, and teasing her for dances, and making picnics. And here am I, the third family of cousins, with no brothers or sisters to cheer me up, left in this dreary place, without a single nice family in the neighbourhood.'

There were drops of water on both sides of the glass as Phyllis reached this point in her reflections, but she brushed them away defiantly. 'I don't care!' she said. 'I will be cheerful in spite of them all. I'll do something pleasant. What shall it be?'

She mused a little longer, and then turning away from the window, she began to pace up and down her spacious room.

'If I don't cease looking out of window, I shall be cross very soon,' she said fretfully. 'That constant splashing and dripping is enough to wear out any one's nerves. I don't suppose Papa minds it? Does he, I wonder? I'll go and see!'

The idea seemed to amuse her. She laughed a little laugh, patted her hair before the glass, and drawing herself up to the full height of her little figure, she walked with stately steps out of her room, and down the winding staircase, stopping with affected carelessness to look out of the tall window half-way down the flight. As she crossed the hall, she hesitated, and looked a trifle frightened; but recovered herself almost immediately, knocked at the door before her, and went in without waiting for an answer.

A man past middle life was sitting at a writing-table, littered all over with books and manuscripts. He looked up as Phyllis entered, and a frown was on his face. 'I did not say "Come in,"' he said sternly.

'Did you not?' rejoined Phyllis, with a fine air of surprise. 'Oh, how sorry I am! Well, but I could not suppose you would wish to be alone on such a miserable day.'

Then, finding no further rebuff forthcoming, she drew a stool near her father's chair, and rested her head against the arm.

'It really is weather in which people ought to stand by each other; don't you think so, daddy?' and Phyllis looked wistfully up at her father. 'For I couldn't bear to sit down comfortably in my pretty room up-stairs, and think that you were dull and worried by yourself down here. So I came to see how my daddy was getting on.'

Mr Marsden moved uneasily in his chair. Above all things, he disliked being interrupted

in his work; and probably on any other day he would have had no scruple in telling his daughter he wished to be alone. But to-day the ceaseless rain and dreary outlook had not been without its influence on his spirits; and that, combined with the pleading look on Phyllis's face, made him answer almost amiably: 'Well, well! perhaps it is!' And with a sigh he pushed aside a large pile of manuscripts that lay on the table before him.

'Why, daddy, you get busier every day!' said Phyllis, noting the movement. 'How I do envy you your writing on a day like this! Let me see what you're doing.' She picked up a tattered, old, leather-bound book which lay at her father's elbow. The characters were strange to her; and she knitted her pretty brows and pursed up her lips as she turned the book first one side up and then the other. 'What a queer old book, daddy! And what funny writing—all curls and dashes and dots! What language is it?'

'Persian,' replied Mr Marsden, wheeling round his chair. 'That queer old book is exceedingly rare, and contains the love-poems of a writer whose name would tell you nothing if I repeated it.'

'That means that he has forgotten it,' observed Phyllis to herself. 'But love-poems, daddy—that really is interesting! Are you going to translate them?' And she patted the old book with quite a loving gesture.

'I am going to try,' replied Mr Marsden, modestly. 'Indeed, I have already finished several; and as you seem tired of your own society, perhaps you would like to stay here a little, and I will read some to you. Possibly your observations on them may be of use to me.'

'Oh, yes! I am sure they will!' exclaimed Phyllis. 'Because I know so much about such things.'

'Do you indeed?' said her father sharply. 'Pray, how and where did you acquire this fund of information?'

'Oh, well, not really, you know! I didn't mean actually, of course,' explained Phyllis in a great hurry. 'Books you know, and stories, and things tell one such a lot.'

'Umph!' said her father, only half satisfied. Then he drew out his sheets of manuscript, turned to the light, and began to read, while Phyllis, with an air of demure propriety, seated herself on a stool before him.

'My beloved is fairer than the white rose of morning. Softer than the antelope's is her eye when she gazes on me. I rose in the night and stood beside her tower.'

'Oh!' cried Phyllis, with a little gasp of shocked astonishment.

Her father bent his brows at her, but went on reading. 'The night was cheered by stars, but in my heart is deepest blackness. Bitter are the waters of thy spring, oh Zoar-Azra! They are sour and bitter in the mouth, and the heart rejecteth them. But affection spurned is sourer still; and beside it Zoar-Azra is as honey mixed with sweet oil.'

'How very nasty!' murmured Phyllis, but her father did not hear her.

'Spurn me not! oh daughter of the mountains!' he read, raising his voice as he came to the loftiest portion of the composition. 'Thou

whose voice is as the enchanting murmur of soft waters heard at evening amid the breath of roses, which light winds carry from the distant walks of winding gardens, heard in silence, broken by no footfall, nor the gentlest rustling of the softest leaf which buds in spring-time on the juniper tree, thou whose hair is'—

'Oh! Ugh! Augh!' yawned Phyllis. 'Papa, I beg your pardon. You know I do think your Persian love-songs disappointing. Poor girl, she would never have stayed to hear all that. Now, when you want to make love to a girl'—

'Thank you!' said Mr Marsden grimly, as he replaced his manuscript in a drawer and locked it up. 'I will not trouble you to tell me what I should do in that very improbable event.—Go away, Phyllis; you are evidently not interested.'

'Indeed, I am afraid not!' sighed poor Phyllis. 'But oh! I am so afraid I have vexed you! Is there nothing more interesting in your funny old book?'

'Nothing that would appear so to you.—Be good enough to leave me now! Robins will let me know when lunch is ready.'

'Oh dear!' sighed Phyllis as she ran across the hall. 'How very hard it is to amuse people when they are old. And I did try so hard not to yawn. Poor daddy, I think he was rather hurt. Shall I come to that when I am old, I wonder? Oh, I do hope not. But I must be very careful not to let the taste for Persian love-poems grow upon me.'

By this time Phyllis had reached her own room, and had thrown herself into a large deep chair beside her fire. 'Love-poems,' she mused—'love-poems are not necessarily Persian. English love-poems would be much nicer! Not all about roses, and bitter springs, and winding walks. No, not at all! Nice, sensible, straightforward love-poems, just like what a nice man would say! But what would he say? What should I say, if I were a man, and wanted to talk poetry?'

She lay considering for some time; and then, with a pencil and paper, endeavoured to write some of the nice love-songs she had imagined. But at first the words would not come; and when they did come, they would not arrange themselves. So in a little while Phyllis threw her pencil down, went to her piano, and played waltzes, with a secret hope that the luscious harmonies might be heard in the study downstairs, and infuse a little warmth into the ancient Persian verses.

When the luncheon bell rang, she went down humming to herself one of the airs she had been playing, and took her seat opposite her father with a pretty unconsciousness of the frowns he cast towards her.

'Papa,' she said at length, having failed in several efforts to draw him into conversation, 'I think of going to see Kitty this afternoon'—then she added, hesitatingly—'if you do not particularly want me.'

'Mrs Huxtable!' said Mr Marsden, interested at once. 'Is her brother at home yet?'

'No; I think he is in Scotland. Shall I remind Kitty that you want to see him?'

'Pray, do no such thing! I presume my acquaintance is of as much value to him as his can be to me. If he comes to call upon me, I

can put him right about several theories he seems to have formed, and direct him to a course of inquiry which may be profitable to him when he returns to Persia. If he does not care to seek that advantage, that is his own affair.'

Phyllis made a mow, under the shelter of a decanter, but said no more. Only, when she rose to leave the room, she stopped by her father's chair and threw her arms round his neck. 'Don't be cross with me, daddy,' she said—'don't be cross with me. I can't help not being clever, you know; and I do love my old daddy, though I plague him so.'

'I'm not cross!' said Mr Marsden, softening—'that is, not very cross.—Well, well; not at all cross. There, get along, little plague! Leave me to finish my claret.'

'But I want you to show you're not cross,' said Phyllis, still hanging round his neck. 'Let me copy your poems out nicely for you. You know I can write a nice clear hand, much better than yours! Let me copy them. Ah! do—then I shall know I'm not in disgrace.'

'Foolish child!' said her father, pinching her cheek. 'You shall have the poems. But be very careful of them. If anything were to happen to them, nearly six months' work would be lost.'

'I'll take the greatest care possible! Oh! you dear old daddy.' And Phyllis ran off radiant.

Half an hour later, she was in a hansom, being whirled rapidly across the river to a quiet square in Kensington, where she was dropped on the steps of a roomy old house, which looked as if all its life it had sheltered dowagers of irreproachable family. The servant who let her in smiled as if he knew her; and Phyllis, nodding and smiling in return, ran lightly up the stairs.

As she laid her hand upon the drawing-room door she paused, for at that moment there issued from within the sound of a deep, man's voice raised in a kind of croon, which sounded inexpressibly odd:

There was an old woman all skin and bone,
Such an old woman was never known.

These words the voice chanted, wofully out of tune; when the further adventures of the old woman were cut short by a much more youthful voice which interrupted, saying with decision: 'I don't like people all 'kin an' bone. Sing "Wing, wang, waddle oh!"'

'Pon my word, Dickie,' said the older voice, 'I'm afraid I don't know that song.'

Phyllis listened with a laughing face, turned as if to go, blushed, hesitated, and then suddenly opened the door and went in. She found a tall, fair-haired man sitting with a little boy astraddle on his knee, looking the picture of discomfort and embarrassment. A younger boy was sitting on the ground between his legs, nursing a green parrot, and causing no trouble to anybody, except when he tried to swallow it, or to wedge his head between the bars of the chair. The moment they saw Phyllis, they started off to meet her, and while the younger one clung to her skirts, the elder boy leapt straight at her, crying out: 'Oh! Auntie Phyllis, he can't sing one bit!'

'Sh! Dickie!' said Phyllis as she kissed him. 'You mustn't be rude.'

'Indeed, Miss Marsden, Dickie is quite right,'

said the young man.—'And permit me to say I am very glad to see you.'

'You look glad, certainly,' Phyllis admitted. 'May I ask where Kitty is, and why you are left in charge of these little people, who seem to be quite too much for you?'

'Too much indeed! I've never spent such an anxious afternoon in my life. The nurse is ill, or dead, or gone to the pantomime—I don't remember what exactly; and Kitty's gone to lie down with a headache. I believe she did it on purpose to see what I should do.'

'Very possible, I should say,' observed Phyllis. 'That corresponds also with my idea of Kitty's character. I should not wonder if you were right. And what did you do?'

But before this question could be answered, Dickie interposed. He had climbed on a chair, and jumped down to the ground ten times in succession; and being somewhat exhausted by this feat of agility, he came over to Phyllis, put his knees on her lap, and said in a pleading voice: 'Please, Auntie Phyllis, sing "Wing, wang, waddle oh!"'

'Not now, Dickie,' said Phyllis, trying to put him off. 'Another time, dear.'

'No, now!' pleaded the boy.

And Captain Benson, with an anxious face, added: 'Indeed, Miss Marsden, I think you had better, if you can, and don't mind very much; for Dickie will never be satisfied until you do.'

'But I am not going to stay! I am going home!'

'For mercy's sake, do no such thing!' cried her companion. 'If you are naturally cruel, remember that you may be in need of help yourself some day, and don't leave me in this emergency.'

'Upon my word!' said Phyllis, shrugging her shoulders, 'what helpless creatures men are!—Yes, Dickie, I'll sing to you, my birdie, as long as ever you like.'

So she sang:

Wing, wang, waddle oh!
Sing, sang, saddle oh!
Fly away, pretty boy!
Over the moon,

to the huge delight of the children, who laughed, and clapped their hands.

Then Dickie said, nodding over towards Captain Benson: 'You listen, and see how she does it!'

'All serene, Dickie,' was the reply; but Phyllis looked annoyed.

'Wouldn't you like to go and smoke, Captain Benson?' she asked.

'I want to learn the art of entertaining children,' he said. 'Pray, go on.'

So Phyllis sang another song, and then another; and then, espying a box of bricks in a far corner of the room, she led the children over there and set them to work to build a temple. Leaving them immersed in this labour, she returned towards the fireplace, and sank into the chair which Captain Benson set for her.

'I thought you were in Scotland still,' she observed, after a pause.

'I did go to one or two places after leaving Dunveth; but they were all very dull. I sup-

pose it was having such a jolly time there that made the other houses seem dull.

'Perhaps,' Phyllis assented. Then she added: 'Alice Markham told me she had never in her life been so bored as she was at Dunveth.'

'How very strange! I thought it such a delightful time. Didn't you?'

Phyllis hesitated. Just at that moment there came a crash, a scream from the children, and the sound of breaking china.

'Goodness gracious me!' cried Phyllis.

'What on earth have the little wretches done!' exclaimed Captain Benson; and they hurried over to the scene of the wreck.

A FAITHFUL TRAITOR.

THE 25th of March 182— was marked by a thaw succeeding a severe frost of three weeks' duration. At Lenham Court, a mansion situated fifteen miles or so from London, on the west side, great inconvenience and some damage had been caused by the bursting of a water-pipe during the day. In especial, one room was rendered so damp that its usual occupant 'Spencer'—Lady Brown-Salter's lady's-maid—was compelled to change her sleeping-place. Instead of sharing one of the housemaids' beds, she chose, with her Ladyship's permission, to make up a bed for herself in the small room, or large cupboard, situated at the end of the corridor which runs through the whole breadth of Lenham Court on the first storey. It was a room used to store trunks and boxes in, and Spencer placed some of these as a foundation for her couch. Many of these trunks had made the voyage to India and back, for Colonel Sir William Brown-Salter had distinguished himself not a little in John Company's service. There had been much extra work for all the servants at Lenham Court that day, and it was late before Spencer retired to her cupboard.

On getting into her bed she found her novel couch by no means so comfortable as it looked. It had to be rearranged; but on extinguishing her candle a second time, she found herself as far from sleep as ever. While she twisted and turned, she heard the stable clock strike two; and immediately afterwards she became conscious of a subdued sound outside her door. Remembering the jokes at her expense at the supper-table about the size of her bed-chamber, it occurred to Spencer that her fellow-servants might be going to play her a trick, or indulge in some practical joke. So she slid from her uneasy couch, and removing the key from the lock—she had locked herself in on coming to bed—she applied her eye to the keyhole. The door, as we have said, faced directly the whole length of the corridor; about two yards from her stood a man, but not one of her fellow-servants; he held a lighted candle in one hand, shading it with the other so as to cast the light now here, now there. His face was concealed by a mask of black crape, and he was listening intently. A breathless minute or two passed, and, as if by magic, there

were either two or three other men in the corridor, all masked in crape, behind which their eyes shone in the candle gleams. They went and came and consulted, noiseless as so many spectres. In and out of the rooms, locking doors softly behind them, now ascending to the third storey, now descending to the basement; now the one holding and shadowing the candle was left alone again.

Spencer drew back from the keyhole a moment, trying to think if there was anything she could do. Sir William's room gave on to the corridor—he must be murdered, thought poor Spencer, or surely she would have heard some sound, for he often sat late reading, and it was round his door that the thieves were clustered. He was a passionate man and a powerful, beloved by his servants for his bounty, though feared on account of his temper. Surely he would have made a fight for it, if he had not been taken at some cruel disadvantage. What could she do? The alarm-bell, even if she could muster courage to try and get to it, was quite at the other end of the house. Applying her eye once more to the keyhole, she was terrified to find not only darkness, but in the darkness, some one breathing close to the door. Then the handle brushed her cheek as it was softly turned, and lock and hinges were strained by the silent pressure brought to bear on them to such a degree that instinctively she drew back, expecting the door to be forced in upon her. The door creaked as the pressure relaxed, and just then the stable clock struck three.

As the minutes passed and silence was unbroken, Spencer gathered courage to look from her spying-place. The watchman stood alone, candle in hand, in his former place. She became stiff and cold at her post; nothing moved that she could hear or see, except that the man trimmed his candle now and then with his fingers, and turned his head watchfully from side to side, his eyes gleaming behind his mask, and seeming now and again to fix themselves on her lurking-place. At a low whistle from the basement, he and his light vanished together. Taking the precaution to stop up the keyhole, Spencer struck flint and steel till she obtained a light, then huddled on a few clothes, inserted the key, turned it, stood one minute outside, in silence and darkness, then snatching up her candle, made a rush for the only open door in the corridor—it was her master's.

Bound hand and foot to a chair, and gagged, was Sir William. The room was in the wildest confusion—boxes, caskets, chests, all turned upside down, and their contents scattered indiscriminately on the floor. Her Ladyship was in bed, bound and gagged too. With nimble fingers Spencer set to work to free her master. No sooner was this accomplished, than, speechless and foaming at the mouth, Sir William staggered out of the room, and, to her dismay, she heard him descend the stairs. Having released her mistress, the lady's-maid next hurried to the rooms of her fellow-servants, on all of whom the keys had been turned after they had been threatened with instant death if they uttered a sound. They were

soon released; and the men-servants descended in a body to the ground-floor in search of their master. Here everything was in disorder. On the dining-room table were the remains of the thieves' supper; but Sir William as well as the depredators had vanished. The groom returned from the stables with the news that his master's favourite hunter was missing. There was no doubt now that he had gone single-handed in pursuit of the thieves—as was indeed the case.

Concluding that they were from London and were returning thither, Sir William had saddled his hunter and started without an instant's delay, save to arm himself with a couple of pistols from the stand of arms in the hall. When he reached the head of the avenue, three-quarters of a mile from the house, he dismounted to open the heavy gates. Then he perceived, in the dawning light of the chill March morning, a strange dog sitting shivering inside the gates, unable either to surmount or pass under them. He concluded at once that the cur belonged to his late visitors, and that, having stayed behind, either for his supper or in search of game, his retreat had been cut off by the closing of the gates. He resolved to follow the clue thus given him, and was confirmed in his resolution when, the gates being opened, the animal scoured away, with his nose to the ground, in the direction of London. Away went the dog, and away galloped Sir William, keeping an eye upon him always. It was broad daylight when the three reached the outskirts of London, and Sir William was hailed by a voice he knew well. It was that of the Major of his late regiment.

'Hullo! Colonel, where are you off to so early?' Major Higgins was on his way home after a night's play at Brooks's.

'Turn your horse's head and I'll tell you,' returned Sir William through his set teeth. The idea of communicating his losses and the indignity, he, an old soldier, had suffered, sufficed to make the blood, which his swift ride had kept at fever heat, boil again.

Major Higgins did as desired; and putting his horse to the gallop, received, in a few words as possible, the news of the night's occurrences at Lenham Court, as he and his old Colonel made their way side by side through Oxford Street and the Strand, never once losing sight of the mongrel that was, he fancied, to be the clue to the recovery of his property. Dodging and winding his way among market carts and hackney-coaches, the dog, never once relaxing his speed, diverged into by-streets and lanes, until he disappeared up a court in Leather Lane.

Dismounting, and giving their horses in charge to a lad, and having impressed a watchman into their service, they advanced up the court in single file. Sir William led the way, a cocked pistol in either hand; Major Higgins, who came next, was unarmed; the watchman brought up the rear in a leisurely way, that showed him by no means thirsting for the fray. Doorway after doorway was examined, but the cur seemed literally to have vanished. In an angle of the *cul-de-sac* into which they had entered, Sir William at last discovered an outside wooden staircase. Despite the remonstrances of his companions, he persisted in creeping cautiously up the crazy stairs. There, curled up at a door, and apparently

fast asleep, lay the clue who had so faithfully but unconsciously guided him to his master's lair.

A summons to open the door met with no response. Sir William, to whom anger and excitement gave additional energy, put his knee to the door, and bidding Major Higgins 'Duck!' as he did so. The door yielded with a crash; a shot passed over the lowered heads of the two officers, and took effect in the cocked-hat of the watchman. A short scuffle, and the thieves saved their lives by surrendering at discretion to Sir William's pistols. On a table in their midst was spread out the whole of the 'swag'; not an article was missing. A presentation sword of Sir William's, the hilt of which was thickly crusted with gems, was the only part of the booty that had met with ill usage; but every diamond, ruby, or emerald that had been knocked from its socket still lay on the worm-eaten table, and was, before many days were past, restored to its accustomed bed. A few bruises and dints in the metal-work of the hilt remained, and these Sir William would show with great glee in after-days, telling how the good sword was lost and won; while, as to the dints and notches on the blade, gained in a more legitimate warfare, the good Colonel could scarce ever be got to speak a word.

GHOSTS.

When the brilliant hues of the sunset fade
Into amber and paly gold;
When the wren and the robin sleep in the glade,
And the shepherd shuts his fold;
When the lamps are lit in the deep, blue skies,
And the toil of the day is done—
Pale, haunting ghosts of the past arise
From the shadows one by one.

The ghost of the words we did not say
In the days for ever fled,
Comes out of the shadows dim and gray;
And the ghost of the words we said,
Of the cruel word, of the bitter word,
Of the word of blame or scorn,
That was keen as the point of a warrior's sword
On a fateful battle morn.

The ghosts of the woes of age and youth,
That we passed unheeding by;
Of the griefs we did not ask to soothe,
Of the tears we did not dry;
Of the ills of which we took no heed;
Of the grievous wrongs unfought—
Come with that of many a churlish deed,
Or of good deed left unwrought.

They cluster round us, these phantom shades,
These ghosts of the days of old,
As the cheerful glow of the daylight fades,
In the twilight dim and cold;
And in vain we moan, and in vain we weep,
And we may not from them hide;
Closer and closer these shadows creep
In the twilights to our side.

M. ROOK.

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ON ANXIETY.

ALL who survive childhood feel the grip of Anxiety at some time and under some form; for, if a man be not anxious from care and business, he will be anxious about his pleasures and indulgences. Anxiety is as searching as the east wind; it pierces into the marrow of our bones, finds out a weak spot, and chills it only to inflame it into a fever—an intermittent fever, however. Intense anxiety is hardly consistent with a persistent ill-fortune: resignation—a mild despair—comes to the relief of the man constantly cast down by ill-luck, and he ceases to kick against the pricks. Hoping nothing, expecting nothing, he fears little. The essence of anxiety is a feverish hope; its quintessence, a sickening fear. The atmosphere of anxiety is uncertainty; its food, suspense. It carries a keen chisel, and carves men's countenances into more wrinkles than all the greater passions put together; while its acid bites into their minds, leaving channels into which fear will run so long as their lives last.

Though a man be so fenced about that for himself he need entertain no anxiety, yet if he be of any magnanimity of soul, anxiety will creep into it for the sake of others. In vain does man strive to forecast the object of his doubt: while watching the east, in all probability his dread will be stealing upon him from the west; if he looks to the north, behold! his fear has found him out, creeping upon him from the south. Or he may teach a cause for anxiety to appear by dreading it; for courage to overcome a devouring fear of the future is as necessary as putting on a bold front in the presence of a wild beast. This is one reason why it should be as much as possible repressed. Another and stronger one why it should be zealously guarded against is, that it clouds and dims the mind, as fasting or ill food subdues the body. And so we become open to an infection, capable of ill thoughts, weak enough to entertain sick suspicions, which would gain no admittance in a healthier state of being.

An anxious night—who has not passed it? For anxieties, like bats, fly best by night. As the twilight falls, how insidiously an anxiety flits into the mind, scarcely troubling us at first—still, it is there. By-and-by, as the gloaming deepens into darkness, the creature brushes past our face, and rouses us with a start to a sense of its presence, filling us with a nameless dread. We coax ourselves into a doze, only to be awakened to a consciousness that the vampire has settled and is sucking our lifeblood. No more sleep for us: we toss and tumble from side to side; the flitting bat-wings of the trouble, and our sighs, the only sounds disturbing the darkness. Now is the time for an exorcism: we try it, and listen fearfully. All is still. Has the enemy departed? For ten panting seconds we believe it has; till a sudden sinking of the heart—a sudden inrush of thoughts and fears that kindle fears, 'an indistinguishable throng'—warns us to put aside all vain notions of reprieve, all hope of release for this one while. We have compared troubles to bats; and when bats have once entered a room, they are difficult of dislodgment; despite drivings to and fro, beatings up and down, they swoop silently and uninjured from wall to wall, just managing to elude their pursuer. An open window and a light outside is a better remedy than all the buffetings within the house; so, to open the window of our mind and let our anxiety flit out into the light of another man's understanding, to tell our fearful anticipations to a friend, is more likely to bring relief than the battering of it up and down in our dark and ruffled minds.

A man may be anxious by habit, or by temperament, or, still oftener, by ignorance; and all these things, like mist, by confusing the outline of an object, magnify it. When a man has suffered anxiety silently and, as the event proves, needlessly, he draws a long breath, and dismisses it wholly from his mind: he was mistaken, that was all. But should his anxiety have been aroused by another needlessly, he feels himself at liberty to despise his prognostications hence-

forth—without, however, suffering his opinion of his own wisdom to be impaired by a perhaps similar error of judgment. But then, no one but himself knew of his mistake, and we live so much in what we think to be other people's opinion of us, that what they do not know is comparatively easy for us to forget. Many nourish a secret dread of naming a fear, lest a whispered word may bring it—like an avalanche, unsettled by a breath—down upon their heads. Others, impatient of suspense, unable to wait with steady nerves to pay their debt in due season, hurry the toll into the reluctant hand of the grim collector: of these are suicides. It is not despair—certainly—that unnerves a man, so much as a prolonged uncertainty; events inclining now this way and now that, until the balance of the strained and anxious mind is lost.

Yet it is exactly the mingling of hope and fear that forms the most powerful stimulant to energy and exertion of which human nature is capable. Under its influence men are goaded to excel themselves. Nay, more, without it, the joys of life would be robbed of half their poignancy. Who is it, think you, that relishes the desire fulfilled, like the man who has experienced hope deferred? There is no one object on which our minds are greatly set, from which all spice of anxiety can be completely banished. The Indian shooting the rapids in his frail canoe feels it, and it adds a thrill of pleasure to his sense of the audacity of his venture; the statesman perorating to the House on a question by which his Cabinet is prepared to stand or fall, feels it running tingling through his veins, adding fire to his imagination, lending eloquence to his tongue. The gambler is so enamoured of its power to brace up his relaxed and over-stimulated nerves, that to its delirious enjoyment he will sacrifice state and station, mankind's and his own esteem, and think the madness cheaply purchased.

Life without the joy of mingled hope and fear, without anxiety, would be a stagnant pool deprived of the spring that keeps the waters running and sweet, and relegating this 'pleasing anxious being' of the Western world to the Oriental calm of fatalism. When the current of life runs slow, when weeds gather on the surface and crowd the depths, we are in danger of yielding to the strongest temptation that besets a life free from fear, unflavoured by hope—namely, the danger of yielding ourselves to the power of the *vis inertiae*; shut up in ourselves, our fancies, our ailments, our own affairs, lost to all use, like Merlin in the forest under Vivien's spell, sunk in sloth, and the 'sweet reasonableness' of doing nothing when nothing apparently needs to be done.

There is a story told of a respectable tradesman, who, having attained the dignity of the *dolce far niente*, confessed to a friend of his that the happiest month in the year to him was the month in which his fit of the gout came on: it gave him something to think about. Let the man—himself on the rack of anxiety and envying the ease of another man's leisure, perhaps—remember, when enduring his own pangs, that a state of mind which entertains neither hope nor fear, which holds out no inducement to activity, is a state bordering on the greatest misery. Moreover, if a man be possessed of a strong mind, he

recognises the fact that this anxiety, so painful to endure, this hoping for the best and preparing for the worst, is the very process by which he may attain the cautious sagacity necessary for the conduct of affairs; his fear has taught him prudence, hope has been productive of patience, both have nourished activity, and the doubt, distrust, and dread of the future, implanted by nature or circumstances, he has learned to moderate by cultivating courage, patience, and cheerfulness; his reward being that feeling of calm, dignified pleasure, which has made it so well worth his while to labour for their attainment.

We have spoken of the Oriental calm of fatalism, such as that which 'Eöthen' attributes to old Shereef, sitting by the bivouac fire, 'unknowing where he was, or whither he might go, unknowing of all geography, but trusting in the goodness of God, and the clenching power of fate, and the good star of the Englishman.' But Oriental ignorance and fatalism, though coupled with trust in God, are not so impressive as that trust in God which is coupled with an absence of superstition, with knowledge, and with courage and self-reliance.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XIII.

And the blossoms that bask in the sunshine
So wanton and fair,
For the apples which wait on their beauty
Have never a care.

EMMA RHODES.

It was the private view day at the Royal Academy, and such a lovely day too, as if Nature wanted to show that there was no flattery in all the beautiful landscapes that adorned the walls. Spring was early that year, and April had been in her kindest mood, and had smiled her sweetest with the soft tears in her eyes, and little balmy breaths of west wind that had opened the fragrant hearts of the wild-flowers to her, and made the young lambs leap with sheer happiness.

Pomona had begun her reign in the Kentish orchards quite a fortnight earlier than usual, and only morbid people prophesied frosts yet to come, and told of little blighted apples falling like hail, under its cruel touch, from trees that had been full of promise in blossoming time.

What troublesome things some people's memories are, on which are indelibly printed all the bad, unfortunate things in life!—snow on the Derby day, frosts in June, chilblains at midsummer, wet hay-making, drenched harvest fields; and there is no mark made by the much more frequent beautiful springs, sunny haytime, and plentiful harvests.

She had no such misgivings. The winter had sped away so pleasantly with that private view day to look forward to, which was to bring Maurice back to her, and it was further shortened by the letters from him that came every few days, and the almost equal delight of writing to him. His letters were not so long as hers; but that she did not expect; indeed, she hardly wished it. Men never wrote so much as girls, and, long or

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ashamed of her, if he met any of his fashionable friends at the private view.

He could not quite conceal his haste to be off and clear of white mice and upset pails and mumps; and Sage felt a little bit sorry, as she hoped Dr Merridew would have come in before they went; and there were several things she would like to show Maurice—some sketches of Scar she had worked up; and a sketch of herself that Owen Ludlow had taken in crayons, and which she had had framed, on the chance of some one liking to have it. And besides, she felt a little remorseful at leaving Will alone, poor Will, who really had a very bad cold, and was in difficulties with the white mouse, known in the family as the Pink un, knowing that the servants would decline all assistance, as they regarded white mice as 'orrid things.'

But all these regrets were forgotten when they were once off in the sunny streets side by side. She gave herself over to perfect satisfaction; there was not a cloud to dim the sunshine, no care or anxiety or doubt to disturb the entire content. Let what would come after, the present was all that heart could desire, and why should it not always be the same, since it was Maurice's presence that made the happiness?

She made no expostulations on the score of economy, when he called a hansom; they would be wise another day, and she would preach prudence and advocate omnibuses and third-class tickets. She did not demur, either, at an elegant, little lunch that he ordered at a restaurant, though she guessed that it must have cost more than most of the meals of the entire Merridew family, servants included. Just for that one day they would be extravagant and enjoy themselves; and after that, be prudent, and go in for two-penny 'buses and buns for lunch, and enjoy themselves just the same.

Now they were at Burlington House. What splendid carriages were turning in; what gorgeous flunkeys were opening carriage doors; and what wondrous toilets issued therefrom, and swept or rustled up the broad steps! Every moment Maurice touched her arm to notice some celebrity passing, some society beauty whose photograph was in all the shops—an archbishop's gaitered legs—some statesman who had come from affairs of vital importance to the country for a few minutes' relaxation with art—there a poet—here a millionaire—now a duchess—then an actor. Sage would have been content to stand all the afternoon and see this brilliant company pass by, with Maurice to tell her who each one was. But Maurice would not linger; and they went on up the stairs and passed straight on to the third room, where hung No. 540.

It looked wonderfully small. That was the first effect. Sage could hardly believe at first that it had not been cut down, or in some marvellous way diminished in size. In the studio at Scar it had seemed such a large picture; and, in her mind's eye, when she had fancied how it would look at the Academy, she had imagined it as among the more important canvases. It was on the line, and showed to great advantage, though Mr Ludlow had declared it was entirely killed and crushed by the big full-length portrait of an alderman's lady in crimson velvet just above it; but perhaps it was the

portrait that suffered, for Pomona showed out in comparison, fair and pure and refined in her white dress with the apple blossom shadow dappling it.

If Kitty had been there, she would have been greatly astonished that every one was not crowding round this picture; and even Sage, who realised that there were other pictures that would attract more attention, was a little surprised that, when they first came up to it, there was no one else looking at it.

'I wonder if any one will recognise you from the picture, Sage?' Maurice said. 'I never thought that Ludlow did you half justice. I don't fancy my portrait will be recognisable, though you declare that you knew me as Vertumnus at the first glance. It is rather humiliating to appear for the first time before the British public in the character of an old woman.'

There was a sort of fascination about the picture to them, though they knew every line and shade of it by heart; and it was interesting, too, to hear the remarks people made on it; but at last they were preparing to go on to the other pictures, when a clear, fresh, young voice behind them caught their ears, and they involuntarily stopped to listen.

'You really must show me this wonderful likeness of mine, Sir Robert. At least half-a-dozen people have been at me since I came in, talking about my portrait. I assure you it is the first I have heard of it.'

'But indeed, Miss Lester, if the likeness is accidental, it is the most marvellous thing I ever heard of. But you will see for yourself. Ludlow is the name of the painter, Owen Ludlow—surely you must know him.—Excuse me'—

This to a broad-shouldered lady, who was consulting her catalogue just in front of No. 540.

Maurice and Sage were standing too close to the speakers to allow of turning to look at them; but they were conscious that a tall girl was standing beside them, with a gentleman behind her, and, when the stout lady had moved away, the man's voice said: 'Now, you will confess'—

And then came a low, rippling laugh, and, after a pause: 'Well, I suppose there is a likeness; but it is a most curious accident, for I never even heard of Mr Ludlow before.'

'He must have seen you—there can be no doubt about that.—By Jove! it seems to me a piece of impertinence to introduce any one into a picture without asking permission. If I were Lady Lester'—

'Well, really, he has drawn a very complimentary portrait of me. I don't see that I have any reason to complain.'

A sputtering attempt at a compliment from the gentleman followed, during which Sage moved away, and Maurice following her, was able, without rudeness, to turn and look at the speakers. A little, fussy, middle-aged, military-looking man, with an eyeglass; and beside him a tall girl—Pomona herself, with the same smiling, sunny face and radiant blue eyes, and apple-blossom tints of complexion; the same bright, soft hair, crowned, curiously enough, with a little bonnet of apple blossom.

The conversation, of which Maurice Moore had heard every word, had only partly reached Sage's

ears; so she did not look with such lively curiosity as he did at the speaker, and did not get such a full view of her as he did, for the gallery was fuller than when they came in, and other people came in the way.

'Did you see, Sage? What an extraordinary thing!'

'She was rather like Pomona, wasn't she?'

'Rather? She might have stepped straight out of the canvas.'

'What odd things likenesses are!' Sage said absently.—'But oh! Maurice, look at that lovely landscape of Leader's!'

But Maurice could not appreciate the pictures. His mind was distracted by the living Pomona; and his eye kept straying from the pictures that so engrossed Sage, and from the catalogue, which he marked almost at random, seeking among the changing crowd the sweet, bright face that was so familiar to him from Ludlow's picture, that it seemed as if it were the face of an old friend.

Once they came across her again; and Maurice felt almost irritated with Sage's raptures over one of Alma Tadema's masterpieces, which entirely prevented her from looking up in time to see the smile with which Pomona received her catalogue, which some hasty passer-by had knocked out of her hold, and which Maurice restored to the little hand in a pearl-gray glove.

That second look made the likeness appear more bewildering than before; and he was so full of it, that he quite started when Sage's voice said, 'Are you tired, Maurice?' and he found her eyes looking at him with tender anxiety.

'Not a bit, dear,' he answered, with a laugh.—'But if you have had enough of the pictures, I want you to come to the Burlington Arcade. I have a fancy that I would like to give you a really good pair of gloves. Pearl gray, shall they be?'

And Sage agreed, with a little sigh of regret for those she had on, which she had been rather proud of, but which he was looking at now with a decidedly depreciating expression.

TRADES-UNION TRAMPS.

THE regular, unmitigated tramp's pet horror are the men who trudge from town to town in search of work—'travelling tradesmen,' as he calls them. Numerous and constantly changing, these are of two classes. There are non-unionists, who live principally by 'calling their trade,' or obtaining assistance from fellow-workmen in situations; and there are unionists, who are allowed by their organisations so much a mile or so much a day. These Society men, again, may be divided into those who voluntarily go on tramp, and those who are obliged to do so by the rules to which they subscribe. Some trades-unions do not compel any member to travel; while others—the Amalgamated Engineers is a case in point—exercise a discretionary power in the matter. The Typographical Society pursues a middle course. To induce its members to search for work, or, rather, to relieve the congestion of labour in large towns, it allows each man

a certain amount when he leaves a branch. A Society printer who has been in Manchester for some little time is given two pounds when he starts on tramp; but he cannot receive this allowance more than once in three years. Always, however, a trades-unionist who leaves a town in search of employment is supplied with a travelling card or certificate, on which is entered by branch secretaries the relief he receives on his journey.

The amount of assistance afforded varies greatly. Carpenters and joiners—and in this, as in all other cases, we of course speak of unionists only—are entitled to one shilling and fourpence a day, unless they be on strike, when they can demand two shillings and fourpence a day for six days in each week. Few, however, take a travelling card. Tailors receive a similar allowance on the road for only forty days in each year, between the months of August and April. During the summer, the busy season in the clothing trade, there is considered to be plenty of work for all. To plasterers the relief is one shilling and sixpence per district; but when they arrive in large provincial centres they are paid three shillings, two days' 'prov.:' and everywhere alike they are allowed one shilling and sixpence extra for Sunday.

Members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers get when on travel the usual out-of-work pay, from six to ten shillings a week, according to the time they have been unemployed, and eightpence a day for bed and breakfast. Iron and tinplate workers, braziers, mounting forgers, tanners, stampers, and galvanisers, are relieved in accordance with the following rule of their Society: 'A member shall be entitled to one shilling a day for not more than thirty days in each statute year. Before being entitled to travelling relief for any one day, he must travel at least fifteen miles from one town towards another, except in the Birmingham district, which is to be comprised within a sixteen-mile radius of Wolverhampton, in which district eight miles from one town to another is to be considered to be one day's journey. In continuous travelling, the relief is still to be one shilling per day where sixteen miles or more are travelled.'

Some trade organisations give relief on another principle—that of distance, not time. The National Amalgamated Society of Operative House and Ship Painters and Decorators used to pay its members three-farthings a mile, and so much for a bed each night; but now it gives them only seven shillings per week for eight weeks in the winter; and if they choose to travel, they have to depend for relief on painters and decorators whom they may be able to find working. At present, the principal Society which pays 'mileage' is the Typographical Association. Last year, its expenditure in this direction was more than twenty-two thousand pounds—an enormous sum, considering that a printer on tramp is entitled

ashamed of her, if he met any of his fashionable friends at the private view.

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portrait that suffered, for Pomona showed out in comparison, fair and pure and refined in her white dress with the apple blossom shadow dappling it.

If Kitty had been there, she would have been greatly astonished that every one was not crowding round this picture; and even Sage, who realised that there were other pictures that would attract more attention, was a little surprised that, when they first came up to it, there was no one else looking at it.

'I wonder if any one will recognise you from the picture, Sage?' Maurice said. 'I never thought that Ludlow did you half justice. I don't fancy my portrait will be recognisable, though you declare that you knew me as Vertumnus at the first glance. It is rather humiliating to appear for the first time before the British public in the character of an old woman.'

There was a sort of fascination about the picture to them, though they knew every line and shade of it by heart; and it was interesting, too, to hear the remarks people made on it; but at last they were preparing to go on to the other pictures, when a clear, fresh, young voice behind them caught their ears, and they involuntarily stopped to listen.

'You really must show me this wonderful likeness of mine, Sir Robert. At least half-a-dozen people have been at me since I came in, talking about my portrait. I assure you it is the first I have heard of it.'

'But indeed, Miss Lester, if the likeness is accidental, it is the most marvellous thing I ever heard of. But you will see for yourself. Ludlow is the name of the painter, Owen Ludlow—surely you must know him.—Excuse me.'

This to a broad-shouldered lady, who was consulting her catalogue just in front of No. 540.

Maurice and Sage were standing too close to the speakers to allow of turning to look at them; but they were conscious that a tall girl was standing beside them, with a gentleman behind her, and, when the stout lady had moved away, the man's voice said: 'Now, you will confess'—

And then came a low, rippling laugh, and, after a pause: 'Well, I suppose there is a likeness; but it is a most curious accident, for I never even heard of Mr Ludlow before.'

'He must have seen you—there can be no doubt about that.—By Jove! it seems to me a piece of impertinence to introduce any one into a picture without asking permission. If I were Lady Lester'—

'Well, really, he has drawn a very complimentary portrait of me. I don't see that I have any reason to complain.'

A sputtering attempt at a compliment from the gentleman followed, during which Sage moved away, and Maurice following her, was able, without rudeness, to turn and look at the speakers. A little, fussy, middle-aged, military-looking man, with an eyeglass; and beside him a tall girl—Pomona herself, with the same smiling, sunny face and radiant blue eyes, and apple-blossom tints of complexion; the same bright, soft hair, crowned, curiously enough, with a little bonnet of apple blossom.

The conversation, of which Maurice Moore had heard every word, had only partly reached Sage's

ears; so she did not look with such lively curiosity as he did at the speaker, and did not get such a full view of her as he did, for the gallery was fuller than when they came in, and other people came in the way.

'Did you see, Sage? What an extraordinary thing!'

'She was rather like Pomona, wasn't she?'

'Rather? She might have stepped straight out of the canvas.'

'What odd things likenesses are!' Sage said absently.—'But oh! Maurice, look at that lovely landscape of Leader's!'

But Maurice could not appreciate the pictures. His mind was distracted by the living Pomona; and his eye kept straying from the pictures that so engrossed Sage, and from the catalogue, which he marked almost at random, seeking among the changing crowd the sweet, bright face that was so familiar to him from Ludlow's picture, that it seemed as if it were the face of an old friend.

Once they came across her again; and Maurice felt almost irritated with Sage's raptures over one of Alma Tadema's masterpieces, which entirely prevented her from looking up in time to see the smile with which Pomona received her catalogue, which some hasty passer-by had knocked out of her hold, and which Maurice restored to the little hand in a pearl-gray glove.

That second look made the likeness appear more bewildering than before; and he was so full of it, that he quite started when Sage's voice said, 'Are you tired, Maurice?' and he found her eyes looking at him with tender anxiety.

'Not a bit, dear,' he answered, with a laugh.—'But if you have had enough of the pictures, I want you to come to the Burlington Arcade. I have a fancy that I would like to give you a really good pair of gloves. Pearl gray, shall they be?'

And Sage agreed, with a little sigh of regret for those she had on, which she had been rather proud of, but which he was looking at now with a decidedly depreciating expression.

TRADES-UNION TRAMPS.

THE regular, unmitigated tramp's pet horror are the men who trudge from town to town in search of work—'travelling tradesmen,' as he calls them. Numerous and constantly changing, these are of two classes. There are non-unionists, who live principally by 'calling their trade,' or obtaining assistance from fellow-workmen in situations; and there are unionists, who are allowed by their organisations so much a mile or so much a day. These Society men, again, may be divided into those who voluntarily go on tramp, and those who are obliged to do so by the rules to which they subscribe. Some trades-unions do not compel any member to travel; while others—the Amalgamated Engineers is a case in point—exercise a discretionary power in the matter. The Typographical Society pursues a middle course. To induce its members to search for work, or, rather, to relieve the congestion of labour in large towns, it allows each man

a certain amount when he leaves a branch. A Society printer who has been in Manchester for some little time is given two pounds when he starts on tramp; but he cannot receive this allowance more than once in three years. Always, however, a trades-unionist who leaves a town in search of employment is supplied with a travelling card or certificate, on which is entered by branch secretaries the relief he receives on his journey.

The amount of assistance afforded varies greatly. Carpenters and joiners—and in this, as in all other cases, we of course speak of unionists only—are entitled to one shilling and fourpence a day, unless they be on strike, when they can demand two shillings and fourpence a day for six days in each week. Few, however, take a travelling card. Tailors receive a similar allowance on the road for only forty days in each year, between the months of August and April. During the summer, the busy season in the clothing trade, there is considered to be plenty of work for all. To plasterers the relief is one shilling and sixpence per district; but when they arrive in large provincial centres they are paid three shillings, two days' 'prov.:' and everywhere alike they are allowed one shilling and sixpence extra for Sunday.

Members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers get when on travel the usual out-of-work pay, from six to ten shillings a week, according to the time they have been unemployed, and eightpence a day for bed and breakfast. Iron and tinplate workers, braziers, mounting forgers, tinners, stampers, and galvanisers, are relieved in accordance with the following rule of their Society: 'A member shall be entitled to one shilling a day for not more than thirty days in each statute year. Before being entitled to travelling relief for any one day, he must travel at least fifteen miles from one town towards another, except in the Birmingham district, which is to be comprised within a sixteen-mile radius of Wolverhampton, in which district eight miles from one town to another is to be considered to be one day's journey. In continuous travelling, the relief is still to be one shilling per day where sixteen miles or more are travelled.'

Some trade organisations give relief on another principle—that of distance, not time. The National Amalgamated Society of Operative House and Ship Painters and Decorators used to pay its members three-farthings a mile, and so much for a bed each night; but now it gives them only seven shillings per week for eight weeks in the winter; and if they choose to travel, they have to depend for relief on painters and decorators whom they may be able to find working. At present, the principal Society which pays 'mileage' is the Typographical Association. Last year, its expenditure in this direction was more than twenty-two thousand pounds—an enormous sum, considering that a printer on tramp is entitled

to only one penny per mile, that he cannot receive more than eleven shillings and eightpence (including an allowance of one shilling and eightpence for Sunday) in any one week, and that the maximum sum he can draw at this rate is eight pounds. Should he not then have obtained work, however, he is entitled to 'second-class mileage'—that is, a halfpenny a mile.

Many Societies, besides those mentioned as doing so, allow a certain sum for Sunday, and the generality of 'travelling tradesmen' can easily obtain something in addition to official relief. When a man makes an unsuccessful application for work at an office or 'shop' where he is known, a collection is often made among the journeymen for him; and the same thing is done almost invariably when a workman on tramp drops in at a lodge meeting of his Society. Sometimes, too, he is presented with a small grant from the Incidental Fund.

The income of a man on tramp, therefore, largely depends on the route he takes—a matter as to which he is not often allowed freedom of choice. Printers may go where they like. Attached to their card is a map of routes, by the aid of which they can find their way all over the country. But, as a rule, the traveller is directed by the branch secretaries on whom he calls, and they guide him according to strikes, the state of trade in particular districts, and other circumstances.

His journey, let him go where he will, is too often a degrading and disheartening experience. Live on the cheapest and commonest of food he must; generally, he is also contaminated by the vile associations of the common lodging-house. There are trades-unions—such, for example, as the Amalgamated Engineers—which provide good beds for members on travel; but, as a general thing, the amateur tramp must get the best lodgings he can. For cheapness he goes to 'four-penny doss houses,' and in those objectionable 'travellers' hotels' all his indoor life for weeks, perhaps months, is spent.

One man, an iron-turner by trade, has thrice been on the road—for two months, ten weeks, and thirteen weeks respectively—and every time he was unsuccessful in his quest for work. Another—a printer—started off from Manchester and tramped all over England, visiting towns as far apart as Newcastle, Birmingham, York, Oxford, Plymouth, Taunton, Cardiff, Lewes, Winchester, St Albans, Hull, Leamington, Hereford, and Hanley. He walked, in fact, through nearly every county in England, and was away altogether seven months, during which he obtained casual labour representing only three weeks' work. Similar instances might be cited in abundance. It is, indeed, a common thing for a man to reach the limit of the official travelling allowance when he is many miles from home and friends, and to have to work his way back, as the non-unionist 'tramping tradesman' lives regularly, by 'calling his trade.'

This is a custom greatly abused. Should a navvy apply for work on an engineering undertaking, and not be started, the men who are on the job give him a shilling to help him on the

road. An idle navvy, therefore, is sometimes better off than a working navvy, because the former can collect six or seven shillings, or more, in the course of a day. Similarly, it is the rule in many trades to present so much to every 'traveller' who calls at a 'shop' or works, or to allow him to make a collection among the men.

Scores of lazy vagabonds—fellows who never had, and never will have, regular employment—take advantage of this admirable custom. Professing a dozen trades in a day, they 'call' them all, telling a different story on each occasion, though really no story is necessary. All that a man need do is to inquire for the 'father of the chapel,' 'the shop steward,' 'the leading hand,' 'the foreman,' or 'the overseer'; everything depends on his asking for the right person and using the phrase customary in the trade he is 'calling.' Sometimes, but not often, a question is put to the traveller. 'What is that?' a baker may say, pointing to his 'peel'; a tailor may see if the man knows the technical terms for a particular kind of work; a printer may pick up a stray 'quad' and ask to be told its size. Any error in replying is fatal; indeed, it has resulted in the applicant being kicked outside. Society men, however, rarely practise this form of swindling; and in calling their own trade they can prove the genuineness of their case by producing their travelling card.

Trades-unionists, when hard pressed, as they frequently are in passing through agricultural districts, are also obliged to sing at public-houses—a mode of 'raising the wind' familiarly known as 'working the pubs'—beg, sleep in casual wards, and avail themselves of charities. All who are in the south of England make a point of seeing at least Watts's Charity, at Rochester, celebrated by Dickens in 'Seven Poor Travellers.' So many wend their way thither, in fact, that the inhabitants of the town look upon the institution as a nuisance; and it is said that some years ago an effort was made to close it, and divert the money left by the founder to other charitable purposes. Almost any evening an odd-looking crowd of 'tradesmen' may be seen outside the unique institution, each man waiting to lay his claim before the Committee to be one of the 'seven travellers' who, by the terms of Watts's bequest, are to be boarded and lodged every night. Admission to the charity is worth trying for; it is a perfect paradise for tramps.

Yet, in spite of insult, hunger, and fatigue, travelling tradesmen, especially those who are unmarried, soon grow to like the life of the roads. 'A wanderer is man from his birth,' and when the natural instinct is revived, many individuals are loth to settle down to regular employment. The great army of habitual tramps is largely recruited from men who start from home with the intention of walking a particular number of miles in the hope that 'something will turn up.' Trades-unions are quite sensible of this and of other evils of the travelling system. The avowed object with which the 'Out-of-work Fund' of the Typographical Association was established in 1873 was to keep men 'off the road'; and the mileage relief of the Amalgamated Society of Painters and Decorators was abolished because it was so grossly abused. But these things are

perhaps inevitable, and certainly they do not detract seriously from the praise due to traders-unions for the assistance they render to those obliged to tramp in search of work.

PHYLLIS MARSDEN'S LOVE-POEM.

CHAPTER II.

It was a sad sight! Dickie had built a beautiful temple. Judging from the ruins, as well as from his broken and tearful explanation, it must have been a singularly fine example of its class. When it was completed, however, Dickie, surveying it with a too critical eye, judged that it wanted colour; and seeing on a bracket not far above his head a valuable little china teapot, of a beautiful blue, he had climbed on a chair, possessed himself of the coveted ornament, and, amid breathless suspense, set it on the cupola of his temple. In that position, any one would have admired it—if only it would have stood erect. It was made with a stupid round bottom, and Dickie's temple had a cupola! It rolled off; it was most mortifying! Not only did the ornament tumble down and break itself too much to be replaced, but, what was worse still, the temple itself, the finest Dickie had ever built, was shaken down in ruins. It was too much to bear! Dickie wept aloud.

At that moment, the door opened suddenly, and a little lady ran in suddenly. 'What, in the name of fortune, is all this noise?' she cried.—'Phyllis, why didn't they tell me you were here?—Harry, what mischief is this? What have they broken? Not my teapot!—Harry, I'll never forgive you!'

Captain Benson retreated to the fireplace, and stood with his hands in his pockets, and a half-smile on his face, watching his sister, while she took up one piece after another of the shattered porcelain. She looked unutterable things at her brother; but Phyllis came forward and touched her arm timidly. 'Do you mind *very* much, Kitty?' she said. 'I am so sorry.'

'My dear Miss Marsden,' interposed Captain Benson, 'this grief is all put on. The teapot had no value. I saw its exact duplicate at Whiteley's on Wednesday, marked tenpence three-farthings.'

'Did you really, Harry?' asked his sister. 'No; but tell me—because Mary Haughton gave me that teapot, and I always suspected she paid very little for it.'

'I shall tell you nothing more,' said Captain Benson. 'I have said too much already. I shall certainly not put into your hands any engine for destroying Mary Haughton's peace of mind.'

Mrs Huxtable drew over to the fire, and settling herself comfortably, said: 'Now, Phyllis, tell us what you have been doing.'

'Well,' said Phyllis demurely, 'I spent this morning or part of it in reading Persian love-poems.'

'Reading what?' exclaimed Mrs Huxtable, sitting bolt upright with a face of amazement.

'It is quite true,' Phyllis nodded. 'At least, they were read to me.'

'And what were they like, these love-poems? Something your father is doing, I suppose.'

'They were not very interesting,' Phyllis ad-

mitted; 'but curious—decidedly curious. They were inflated and roundabout, and there was a great deal about the moon and roses, and the night and towers.'

'I see,' Captain Benson assented. 'All topics which have no business to be in a love-poem, which should be terse'—He paused.

Phyllis nodded.

'Direct in expression.'

'Of course.'

'Not too long.'

'Certainly not,' said Phyllis with decision, 'or one would be horribly bored.'

'I think you are very dull, you two,' said Mrs Huxtable, stifling a yawn. 'Can't you talk of something more interesting?'

'Forgive us, Kitty,' said her brother. 'Of course, your interest in such things ended when you married.'

Captain Benson went off to have a cigar; half an hour later, he returned with a sheet of paper in his hand. 'Why, where is Miss Marsden?' he asked.

'Half-way home, I should think. What do you want her for?'

'I had something to show her. Never mind; I will send it to her.'

Next morning dawned brightly, and Phyllis, as she donned her dainty garments, was half inclined to regret her hasty promise of the previous day, knowing full well that if her father's approval was to be gained, at least some hours must be devoted to copying the manuscripts.

Running lightly down-stairs, she paused to gather up a letter which lay on the hall table. 'Only one! When I expected at least half-a-dozen, and it looks like a stupid one. I don't know the writing.' Tearing the envelope, she entered the dining room, but stopped abruptly: 'DEAR MISS MARSDEN—Apropos of the love-poems we were discussing yesterday'—Phyllis hastily turned the sheet and read the bold signature, 'H. BENSON.' Flushing slightly, she put the letter in her pocket, as her father's step was heard in the hall. Why should Captain Benson write to her? It was a woman's question, and though little more than a girl, she had become a woman all at once after meeting Mr Benson at Dunveth. Her father did not note the difference, and she did not quite comprehend it herself. But difference in Phyllis there was.

She bade her father good-morning, but Mr Marsden took no notice of her remark, only seated himself at the head of the breakfast table; while Phyllis, surprised at the unmistakable gloom on his face, sheltered herself behind the coffee-pot.

Mr Marsden raised his eyes absently, then seeing his daughter's anxious face, remarked: 'I am perplexed, Phyllis. I have come to a line in the finest of my poems—the one I read, or'—pausing as he remembered the incident—'began reading to you yesterday, and I fail to find any word which expresses the sublime meaning of the original.'

Seeing that her father really was distressed, Phyllis rose, and putting her arm round his neck, said lovingly: 'Never mind; the right word will come; and in the meantime do start me copying; and when you see how beautiful your poems

look, you will be inspired with fresh terms of admiration.'

Half an hour later, Phyllis in her own room was seated at her pretty writing-table, a large sheet of foolscap before her, a pile of untidy scraps of paper by her side, and a letter stuck up on the writing-table before her.

'My beloved is fairer than the white rose of morning,' wrote Phyllis. But her eyes turned again to the love-poem in that letter signed H. Benson.

'I sleep to dream of thee,' it said.

'I wake to live for thee,' it continued.

'And this is all for thee!' was the conclusion. This love-poem was certainly not too long.

'Must I answer it, I wonder? The lines really are direct, short, and to the point—out of his mother's old album, too! However, I can't write now, if at all;' and Phyllis determinedly placed the letter face downwards on the table, and for some time wrote most perseveringly.

The work proved far more interesting than she had expected. The quaint metaphor, exaggeration of language, and, to English minds, strange jumble of ideas, amused her; and she was surprised to find she had been writing steadily for an hour when she heard her father's voice calling her, 'Phyllis, Phyllis!' irritably.

'Coming, papa! Just coming!—Yes; what is it?' and Phyllis, peering over the banisters, saw her father impatiently pacing the hall below.

'Come here, Phyllis! You have taken all the notes of the poem I am engaged on now. They were all together on the right-hand side of my table, and I can find them nowhere. If you really wish to help me, you ought to be more careful.'

'I am sorry, papa. You can keep them till to-morrow. I wish I hadn't mixed them up. And here are the four I have copied. They really do look better now, don't they? And I found them interesting! Indeed, I did!'

Mr Marsden took the papers and manuscript, only half mollified; and Phyllis heard the key turn as he closed his study door. She looked back a little wistfully.

As she prepared to go out she could not help thinking of that love-poem from Captain Benson, and why he had sent it to her, and why her father should dislike him so, and why, since she knew him, something had entered into her life and made it all strange and new, with only her father's hatred of Mr Benson to darken the vision.

Notwithstanding this slight shadow, few brighter faces than Phyllis Marsden's could be seen as she sped gaily on her walk round Kennington Park. The sun shone brightly, and the air was crisp and clear, with a first feeling of frost. Phyllis felt exhilarated; and being breathless with her walk, and tempted by the sunshine, made for a seat at a convenient distance, and sat down to rest for a moment.

'I wake to live for thee!' sang a robin perched on a small bush near at hand, a cheery little fellow, who looked at Phyllis with a knowing look on his face.

'What ought I to do?' thought Phyllis. 'Why do I keep thinking of those lines, and why did Captain Benson send them to me? I wish I knew more about these things, or had some one to ask'—And Phyllis, looking cau-

tiously round, put her hand in her pocket and pulled out—nothing.

'It must be here! I know I had it in my pocket. Stay. Did I change my dress? No: then where is it?' And Phyllis in her impatience turned her pocket inside out; but there was nothing save a dainty embroidered handkerchief.

'Oh, I know! I must have left it on my writing-table. I had it there, of course!' And Phyllis, with a relieved expression, turned to retrace her steps.

The lunch gong sounded as she ran up the steps; and she was met by Robins. 'The master wished me to say he did not want to be disturbed; and I have taken him lunch in a tray.'

Phyllis's face fell as she replied: 'Very well, Robins. I shall be down directly.'

Up-stairs, Phyllis stood before her glass, smoothing her hair, a flush of annoyance on her pretty face, and tears of vexation in her eyes. 'It is too hard! I felt certain I should find it on my writing-table. There is no doubt I must have gathered it up with papa's papers, and now he has got it; and he is sure to read it, for I had carefully folded it with the verses outside, and he wouldn't see it was a letter at first. Oh! I do hope he won't see it before I can get it back. For he so dislikes Captain Benson, without having even seen him.'

Down-stairs, a bent and prematurely old man leaned on a paper-strewn writing-table, an open letter in his hand, an expression of mingled love, pity, and distress softening his hard, careworn features.

'Phyllis, my child, my little girl!' he murmured. 'She has grown into a woman, and I have been blind to it.' And then seating himself in his chair, and passing his hand wearily over his eyes, he thought of another Phyllis who had been his wife and his little girl's mother.

The afternoon passed wearily away, and Phyllis restlessly paced backwards and forwards in her large drawing-room, now striking a few chords on the grand piano, now picking up a delicate piece of fancy-work, or scanning the pages of a novel. 'I can't help it! I shall settle to nothing until I know. I shall go and hunt up papa; and if he is angry, it will be over. I have done nothing wrong, and I certainly couldn't help getting that letter. If he has not found it, I may have an opportunity of getting it back; and then we'll see what will become of Captain Benson's love-poem. "Live for thee!" Fiddlestick! Why, that person must have been lived for, ages ago, and died for too, for the matter of that. Tiresome creature! Why couldn't she keep her love affairs to herself, instead of letting them get me into trouble!'

Dearily, Mr Marsden sat over his study fire, the tray of luncheon untouched beside him. For three hours he had been sorrowfully living over his past life. Visions of the past flitted through his mind. A young student, fresh with university honours, and craving for literary distinction—months of study and Oriental travel; and then a period of purest happiness, no longer alone, but cheered and encouraged by a bright, loving presence; and then—then a long period of black, deepest despair; a life taken up again, but hence-

forth never to be shared with living soul—alone, yet not alone—a tiny, toddling babe, the merriest creature imaginable, who absolutely declined to be suppressed, crept into his life; a little being who would not be ignored; who expected to be welcomed on every occasion; who lisped ‘Daddy, daddy!’ as she patted the knee, and glanced up into the face of the grave, preoccupied man who lived the life of a recluse.

And now Phyllis—Phyllis, the living image of that other Phyllis, his wife; and Mr Marsden paused as he thought of what the long weary years would have been, uncheered by the merry prattle and loving ways of his child, his little one!

‘I don’t think it can be too late! She has only known him a few months. I must see what can be done; and find out something more about this “Yours very faithfully, H. Benson.”’

A low tap and timid voice. ‘Papa! do let me come in; it is tea-time;’ and with this the door opened, and Phyllis, nervous and excited, entered the study. Something in her father’s manner struck her at once with a feeling of alarm. ‘Papa, what is it? Are you ill? Why, how cold you are! And your luncheon never touched! Why, you must be starved!’ Phyllis laid her hand on her father’s and looked up in his face.

‘Not cold, exactly,’ he replied, ‘nor even hungry. But I came to a standstill in my work, and have been sitting here feeling a good deal upset ever since.’

Phyllis rang the bell, and set herself to work to stir up the last embers of the fire.

‘Bring tea in here as soon as possible, Robins!’ And Phyllis drew her stool to her father’s knee, and began chafing the almost numb fingers. ‘Papa, I shall confiscate all your work, if you behave so! The poems really are not worth it;’ and Phyllis glanced at the writing-table. ‘However, here is tea, and that will put some warmth into you.’

Phyllis rose; and in a short time Mr Marsden, once more warm and comfortable, lay back in his chair, listening to his daughter’s chatter, and ever and again passing his hand over the soft silky head. The caress was so unusual that Phyllis felt more uneasy still.

‘I hope papa is not going to be really ill,’ she pondered, ‘or have one of those awful fits of depression. I thought he had quite got over them.’

Then, with a glance at her father’s worn features, she went on to herself: ‘This makes it even more unfortunate about that letter. I must get it back.’ She half rose, looking wistfully at the writing-table.

The movement roused Mr Marsden. ‘Where are you going, Phyllis?’

‘Nowhere, papa. I was only going to draw the curtains and tidy up your table a bit.’

‘Sit still, child: I want you to write a note for me. I have been thinking perhaps I am foolish in my prejudice against Captain Benson, and ought to take advantage of his being in town to discuss some of the difficult points of my work with him. He has the reputation of being a clever man. I confess I consider it would have been better taste if he had called on me. But I suppose that would have been too much to expect.’

‘Papa, that is not just, really. It is my fault he has never come. He said several times in the summer he should take an early opportunity of calling on you; and I always put him off, and said you never saw any one. I thought he would only bore you.’

‘Bore me, Phyllis! Does he bore you?’

‘Me, papa!’ with wide open eyes. ‘Oh, no! not a scrap. But then it is different with me.’ And Phyllis smiled, as she thought of the many picnics and tennis parties of that never-to-be-forgotten visit. ‘Now let me write the note. What day shall I say? May I write at your table?’

‘You had better ask him to dinner on Thursday; and you must ask Mr and Mrs Huxtable, too, since he is staying with them.—No; I shall be using my table. I have a few letters I must write before dinner; and I have no small note-paper here, either.’

Phyllis felt the fates were against her; but she would make one more effort. ‘Very well; and I may as well take your notes and do some more copying after dinner. I have nothing else to do.’

‘The poems must wait till after I have seen Captain Benson,’ replied Mr Marsden. ‘They ought to be arranged carefully, according to the different periods; and that is one of the points on which I want another opinion.’

Phyllis saw that it would be useless to attempt regaining her letter that evening. Mr Marsden looked wistfully after the slight figure as she left the room. ‘Shall I call her back, and tell her what I know? Even now I might gain her confidence!’ Mr Marsden half rose from his chair; then the habit of years of reticence overcame him, and he reseated himself.

Outside, Phyllis paused an instant with her hand on the door handle. ‘Shall I go back now, and tell papa everything? If only he were always as he has been this evening, I should never mind telling him anything. But he will be dreadfully annoyed; and he does not seem well to-night.’

So Phyllis took her candle and went up to her room.

FORTUNES IN VOICES.

THE Philosopher’s Stone—that dream of the old alchemists—takes many forms nowadays, but none more beautiful than that of the voice of a great singer—a truly potent spell to open the gold mines of earth! The amounts that have been paid to the famous sopranos, tenors, contraltos, and basses who have appeared from time to time above the musical horizon sound well-nigh fabulous, and are not a little interesting to consider. To go back to the early years of the last century, and to the early days of the Italian opera in this country, Mrs Catherine Tofts, its first lady-interpreter in England, claimed high salaries at the theatre in Lincoln’s Inn Fields. She drew considerably over six hundred pounds for a season; and at one time she was singing for twenty guineas a night—high terms in 1708. At the same theatre, twenty-six years later, the great singer, Farinelli, during the three years he spent in London, though his salary was but

fifteen hundred pounds a season, earned at least five thousand pounds yearly; for at but one of his numerous appearances at court, the Prince of Wales gave him 'a fine wrought gold snuff-box, richly set with diamonds and rubies, in which was enclosed a pair of diamond knee-buckles, as also a purse of one hundred guineas.' Later in life he accepted an engagement at the court of Spain at a salary of fifty thousand francs (about £1979) per annum.

Two years after Farinelli had left London, the other great singer of the time, Caffarelli, appeared at the King's Theatre, but did not fulfil the expectations he had raised, though at Venice he received £385 and a benefit of £335 for a season of three months—higher terms than had previously been paid to any singer.

In 1768, Gabrielli, one of the most beautiful of women and magnificent of sopranos, demanded five thousand ducats salary from Catharine II. of Russia. The Empress objected that it was larger than the pay of a field-marshal. 'Then let your field-marshal sing for you,' retorted Gabrielli, as Caffarelli had replied before under like circumstances.

That phenomenal soprano, Agujari, was in 1775 paid one hundred pounds a night for two songs at the London Pantheon concerts—an immense salary in those days. About thirty years later, Catalani was receiving three thousand pounds for the season in Portugal; and in 1806 she came to London for a promise of two thousand pounds for the season from September 15th to August 1807, with a further sum of one hundred pounds to defray the cost of her journey to London, and one benefit night free of expense. As a fact, however, she drew from the King's Theatre in the Haymarket five thousand pounds, including benefits; and her total profits in 1807, with concerts and provincial tours, were £16,700. She once received two hundred guineas for singing 'God save the King' and 'Rule Britannia'; and for her services at one festival she was paid two thousand pounds. Her charities, however, were innumerable; and it is estimated that she earned at least two million francs at concerts for such purposes alone. As an instance of her reckless extravagance, it is stated that the cost of beer for her servants for a single year amounted to one hundred and three pounds.

The next singer, taken in chronological order, whose salary was unusually large was Pasta, who, having sung at the King's Theatre in 1816 with her husband at a joint salary of four hundred pounds for the season, was engaged alone in 1826 at £2200—an amount which was increased the following year to £2365. In 1840, after a long retirement from the stage, she accepted two hundred thousand francs to sing again at St Petersburg, though, for her reputation as a singer, it had been better had she refused.

In 1828 Lablache drew sixteen hundred pounds, with lodging and a benefit night free of expense, for a season of four months. This was, however, not nearly his value in an operatic company.

At the King's Theatre, in 1825, Malibran made her début, and was immediately engaged for the remaining six weeks of the season at five hundred pounds. In 1830 she was paid in Paris 1075 francs for each operatic representation, though a year before she had received sixty-six pounds

from Laporte in London for each performance. For each private concert in London she was paid twenty-five guineas; and she was engaged by Mr Alfred Bunn for nineteen nights at one hundred and twenty-five pounds per night, payable in advance! Singing at Drury Lane in English opera in 1833, she received eighty thousand francs (£3200) for forty representations, with two benefits, which produced not less than fifty thousand francs (two thousand pounds). Two years later, at the opera in London she drew £2775 for twenty-four appearances. Such sums were paid to her at the English provincial festivals as had never before been heard of; and at La Scala she received nearly eighteen thousand pounds for one hundred and eighty-five performances.

In 1838 Mario was offered sixty pounds a month for his first appearance, though this was of course largely the result of his romantic history. Alboni's salary at Covent Garden in 1847 was raised from five hundred pounds to two thousand pounds the day after her first appearance, singing as she was against Jenny Lind at the opposition house. Sontag was paid six thousand pounds for a season of six months at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1849.

Rubini, who began his career at thirteen years of age by singing, for five francs, an air in a new drama by Lamberti, made immense sums in later life, realising two thousand pounds at one concert in St Petersburg. Unlike Mario and Mara, who both died in comparative poverty, Rubini saved large sums, and left behind him one of the largest fortunes ever amassed on the operatic stage.

Jenny Lind was naturally paid enormous sums in the course of her triumphant career. During a tour of two years through the States, commenced in 1850, she made twenty thousand pounds, gaining a husband as well!

These pecuniary traditions are adequately preserved by at least two present-day singers, to whom a hundred or two for a concert is an ordinary sum—Madame Patti and Madame Albani. It is current knowledge that the usual terms of the former are eight hundred pounds per concert in London, and four hundred pounds in the provinces; and it was announced the other day that for a prospective tour in the States, during which she is to give about forty-five performances—some at the Chicago Exhibition—she will receive £40,500, or nine hundred pounds per concert, plus all travelling expenses. Madame Patti lately refused an offer of a tour in Brazil at the remuneration of twelve hundred pounds a night.

Fairly handsome salaries are paid also to leading artists of the Vienna opera. The florin is just now worth about one shilling and three-pence, and Herr Winkelmann, a tenor who appeared in London in German opera some years ago, is paid twenty-six thousand florins (£1625) for a season of nine months. M. Van Dyke gets about twenty-four thousand florins; but he sings only seven months of the year in Austria. Frau Materna, who is soon to retire, to be replaced by Frau Klafsky, gets the same amount for the whole year; and Frau Schlüger, the dramatic soprano, receives twenty thousand florins per annum. The tenors thus get more than the sopranos.

Before leaving the subject of singers salaries,

it were curious to mention the remuneration received some years ago by Mademoiselle Zélie, of the Théâtre Lyrique at Paris, while singing at a concert in the Society Islands, in the course of a tour round the world. She was to sing an air from 'Norma,' and a few other songs, and bargained for a third of the receipts. She found that her share consisted of three pigs, twenty-three turkeys, forty-four chickens, five thousand cocoa-nuts, and a considerable quantity of bananas, lemons, and oranges!

MRS MELROSE'S COMPANION.

By RICHARD WARFIELD.

'ABSURD!' cried Mrs Melrose scornfully; 'you must be dreaming, I think, Maria, or you would never propose such a piece of foolery. Why, that little chit is forty years younger than he is, at least.' And the angry widow tossed her head disdainfully, as if to imply she had never heard such ridiculous folly before.

Maria remained silent, knowing, probably from long experience of her friend's petty outbursts of temper, that silence was the only safe course to adopt. Her poor little heart was beating rapidly: she so much dreaded offending her benefactress, who really was a most kind-hearted, agreeable sort of person in a general way, and not much given—that is, as the world goes nowadays—to ebullitions of anger against her paid dependent.

On the afternoon, too, of which I write Maria had been particularly indiscreet—had shown an alarming want of tact, which in Mrs Melrose's eyes was scarcely forgivable. For poor Maria had actually suggested that an oldish gentleman, a well-to-do widower for whom Mrs Melrose had been fruitlessly angling for a long time, had appeared to be greatly enamoured of a certain young lady—a mere chit, as Mrs Melrose designated her, scarcely out of the schoolroom.

She was a tall, stout, well-made woman, this Mrs Melrose, a woman of distressingly doubtful age, just the wife for an affluent widower with no encumbrances; and as she sat with knitted brow reflecting on what Maria had been telling her, she fully resolved to make one last desperate effort to catch the widower, Mr Heavysides, who was now over sixty.

'Maria,' she began in a stony manner, shaking her head till every false curl rustled lustily, 'pray, let me never again hear you give speech to so improper and immoral an opinion. I am deeply distressed when I reflect that you, who for years have lived under my roof and had the priceless advantage of my almost daily companionship, have made no better use of your time than to form fatuous and wicked conjectures about your neighbours.'

'I only repeated what every one is saying,' Maria remarked, meekly.

'Don't interrupt me, please,' replied Mrs Melrose in her most majestic tones; 'nor do I ever desire to know what every one is saying.'

You must be aware by this time, Maria, that village gossip and tittle-tattle have no interest for me. I hope I am above listening to petty slanders and jealousies. You may be quite sure that if Mr Heavysides *does* see fit to marry again, he will choose a woman of suitable years and deportment.'

'Yes,' said Maria, feeling something was expected of her.

'As it happens,' continued Mrs Melrose, 'I had intended calling on Mr Heavysides this very afternoon—I hear his gout is worse again—and as matters now stand I shall feel it incumbent upon me to tell him of the scandalous reports in circulation respecting him. Though the affair is of a delicate nature, I, as a friend of long standing, may, I think, without detriment to my self-respect, make him acquainted with all you have told me. I am sure he will be greatly grieved.'

'Please don't give him reason to suppose I told you, Mrs Melrose.'

'I shall use my own judgment, Maria, and act as I deem best.' So saying, the lady rose, and left the room with a grand sweep of silk and lace.

Outside the door, however, her whole demeanour changed, and running up-stairs as quickly as her years and weight would allow, she was soon engaged in getting herself up to the best advantage. And when she had finished, she might, with her rouged face, false teeth, and yellow curls, have really been taken for what she was fifteen years before.

Poor Maria, in anything but an enviable state of mind, watched her patroness leave the house. Tears coursed down her pale, tired-looking face. 'Oh dear! oh dear!' she exclaimed, 'what shall I do? He is the only one who has ever spoken a kind word to me during the weary years I have been here. And now she is bent on setting him against me; I know she is. But it serves me right; I have only my own folly to thank.'

Meanwhile, the widow, conscious of her unimpeachable appearance, walked through the village, bestowing bows and nods in every direction. She was highly pleased with herself, and consequently felt amiable towards all mankind—except Maria. The village of Wychford stood a few miles away from a large manufacturing town, and several families of pretty good social status lived in it, the male members of which went daily by train to their business, returning home in time for a seven o'clock dinner. Mrs Melrose was rather a favourite among these people—partly because she was excellent company, partly because they derived a great amount of amusement from watching her airs and graces.

'I ought to have been born a duchess,' she said, plaintively, on one occasion, with a naïveté which was positively ludicrous, 'I feel myself so suited for the rôle.'

Once seated in Mr Heavysides' parlour, and having inquired tenderly after the old gentleman's

health, Mrs Melrose gingerly approached the subject uppermost in her mind.

'I should think you must find it very lonely here in the house all day without a soul to speak to?' she began.

'I have a housekeeper, madam,' Mr Heavysides returned.

'Oh yes—Mrs Perkins, of course; but she is an ignorant, uneducated woman. What I meant was that you have no congenial companion with whom you can interchange ideas.'

'Mrs Perkins has an uncommonly educated idea of cookery,' replied the invalid; 'so we have a mutual ground of sympathy there.'

'What a tiresome man!' thought the widow. —'I must try another tack.'

The truth was Mr Heavysides had long ago discovered the lady's anxiety to share the joys and sorrows of his home, and, recognising in her a dangerous matrimonial campaigner, was always more or less on his guard when in her presence, momentarily watching for some token that she was about to recommence her amorous siege; and when she opened fire by commiserating his loneliness, he was instantly on the alert.

'Oh, by the way,' she pursued, playfully tapping him on the arm in a would-be reproachful manner, 'I have heard such a shocking, shocking story about you this afternoon. Surely, it cannot be true?'

'I cannot say, madam, until I know what it is.'

'Well—now you must not be cross with me, for I assure you it is the talk of the whole place, though it is too ridiculous for anything—it is said, and openly, that you are going to marry that minx of a Milly Dale. Did you ever hear the like?'

'It is very foolish talk,' assented Mr Heavysides.

'Just what I said,' chimed in Mrs Melrose eagerly. 'Of course, I gave the report a flat contradiction. "I am sure that Mr Heavysides would have told an old friend like me if there were any truth in the rumour," I said. "Rely upon it, it's nothing but a *canard*!"'

'I thank you, madam—I thank you from my heart,' cried Mr Heavysides fervently, a merry twinkle in his eye. 'No,' he continued, 'if ever I do see fit to change my present lonely state—and I will not say that I shall not—I shall marry no bit of a girl, but some good, worthy woman of an age suitable to my declining years. For you are right, my dear friend; mine *is* a lonely life, and I often think a wife would be a source of comfort and solace to me.' And the old gentleman clasped the widow's fat hand in his.

'I am sure she would,' murmured the lady, actually blushing beneath her rouge.

'I am not poor,' went on Mr Heavysides—'far from it—and I have neither kith nor kin to whom to leave my money. Therefore, my widow, supposing I were the first to be taken, would inherit all I possess.'

'Dear man!' cooed the enraptured Mrs Melrose, 'how good you are!' for she no longer doubted that victory was hers.

'And may I—dare I tell you a secret?—Yes? Very well. I have already chosen a lady'—giving the plump fingers a hearty squeeze—'to whom to offer my heart and hand. Do you think she will accept them?'

'I am sure she will,' cried the now secretly exulting woman. 'Who could refuse any request of yours?'

Pen cannot describe the state of elation in which Mrs Melrose proceeded homewards. Her face was literally wreathed in smiles, and she held her head quite two inches higher as she walked along the street. Maria, who was seated at the parlour window, darning a table-cloth, happening to glance up as Mrs Melrose came along the garden path, was struck with amazement by the amiable expression on that lady's countenance. 'What can have occurred? She's in high good humour about something,' mused the companion.

'Marie, my dear,' exclaimed Mrs Melrose, as she burst into the room, 'I'm afraid I was rather cross with you before I went out; but I did not mean it, child. There! let me give you a kiss. I know you are a dear, good, faithful creature, though a little trying sometimes.'

Marie! Child! Only on very rare occasions did Mrs Melrose use these pet names when addressing her companion.

'Have you seen Mr Heavysides?' inquired Maria timidly.

'Dear me! yes,' Mrs Melrose cried; 'and such news as he told me! You'd never guess it if you tried for a month.'

'That he's engaged to Milly Dale?'

'You'll make me quite angry again, Maria, if you will persist in such obstinate ideas! Mr Heavysides disclaimed all intention of making so preposterous a union. But,' and the widow gave a meaning smile, 'he is going to marry a second time, and the name of the lady is well known to you, Maria.' So saying, Mrs Melrose quitted the room and went up-stairs to take off her outdoor garments.

Meanwhile, Mr Heavysides had been engaged in a manner which, to say the least, was very extraordinary. No sooner had he heard the house door close behind his guest, than he lay back in his chair and gave vent to a series of spasmodic chuckles. 'I'll do it,' he gasped—'I'll do it. What fun it will be! And she really is a very nice little thing, and would make an excellent wife. She has not a very gaudy time of it with the old woman, I'll be bound. How mad she'll be. She thinks I mean business, and so I do; but not with her!' and the old fellow spluttered and grimaced till he nearly choked himself with merriment.

'Maria,' said Mrs Melrose about eleven o'clock the next morning, 'can you see who that is just opening our gate? I do not recognise the lady.'

'It's Mrs Perkins, Mr Heavysides's housekeeper,' answered Maria.

The widow bridled and smiled meaningly. 'Ah! yes, to be sure! I'd forgotten; but he did say something about sending here this morning, though what about I do not remember.—Just run to the door, Marie dear, and see what Mrs Perkins wants.'

'Good-morning, Miss Stonor,' began the house-keeper, in a purposely loud voice. 'I hope I see you well, miss? Master's sent these here grapes for Mrs Melrose with his compliments, and hopes as she'll enjoy them; "which no doubt, she will," says I, "as they're some of the finest you've got, sir."'

During this speech, which for Mrs Perkins was one of unwonted length, the housekeeper winked incessantly at Maria, to attract her special attention, and at the end of it pressed a note into her hand, with a whispered admonition to put it into her pocket and read it when alone.

'What are you dawdling out there for so long, Maria?' Mrs Melrose cried shrilly from the sitting-room.—'Oh, what beauties!' she pursued, as Maria entered bearing Mr Heavysides' gift in a basket. 'How kind, how thoughtful of the dear man to send me such a delicious present!—Give Mrs Perkins a glass of sherry, Maria—not the best,' she added in a lower tone. 'Also, Maria, tell her to convey my compliments to Mr Heavysides and my best thanks. He must have been aware of my penchant for grapes.'

As soon as the companion could steal away for five minutes to her own room, she hastily tore open and perused the note given her by Mrs Perkins. It was very brief, and surprised her not a little. 'DEAR MISS STONOR'—thus it ran—'You will probably be astonished by the request I am about to make—namely, that you will call upon me without delay; nor would I so far trouble you were I not suffering from a slight attack of gout. I have something of great importance to communicate to you; and as I am unable to leave home, I trust you will so far humour me as to come to see me as soon as an opportunity presents itself?—Please, let no one know I have written to you.—I am yours very truly, GEORGE ALEXANDER HEAVYSIDES.'

'What can he want to tell me?' Maria pondered. A conviction—even a suspicion—of the truth never crossed her mind.

'Maria! Maria!' rang out the piercing tones of Mrs Melrose. 'Come here at once; I want you.'

The poor drudge hastened in answer to the imperious summons, and found Mrs Melrose busily employed in eating the grapes brought by Mrs Perkins. 'Maria,' she said, 'I wish you to go out to do a little shopping for me. Please, get ready immediately.'

'Yes,' murmured Maria in a dreamy voice, gazing into vacancy, her faculties still absorbed by the mysterious contents of Mr Heavysides' note; 'get ready, yes.'

Mrs Melrose bestowed on her a chill and haughty stare. It was thrown away, however; Maria was completely unconscious of it or its significance—entirely oblivious of Mrs Melrose's presence.

'Maria!'

With a start she came out of her brown-study, and a comical look of terror spread over her face. 'I beg your pardon, Mrs Melrose,' she began; 'I did not mean to be'—

'No excuses, please, Maria,' broke in the matron in glacial tones. 'If you don't think it worth while to pay attention to what I am saying, pray tell me. I am not an exacting mistress, Maria, far too indulgent, as is evidenced

by the fact that you so little heed what I say. I have been too kind to you, Maria, that is the truth; and I have long thought, Maria, that you have ceased to value your situation.'

Now, although Mrs Melrose spoke thus decidedly, it was far from her intention that her humble friend should really leave her. Maria was much too useful to be parted with in a hurry; and Mrs Melrose merely wished to strike terror to her dependent's heart. She did not imagine for a moment that she would be taken at her word. But she reckoned without her host. A worm will indeed turn if pressed too hard; and a certain undefinable elation inspired by Mr Heavysides' note, notwithstanding that she had not the remotest conception of why he desired to see her, caused a sudden feeling of loathing against her tyrannous mistress to arise in poor, down-trodden Maria's mind; and this feeling made her reply to Mrs Melrose: 'Indeed, I think you are right; I have stayed with you too long; I will leave this day month.'

Astonishment held Mrs Melrose speechless—astonishment not unmixed with uneasiness. What if Maria really meant what she said? Where could she (Mrs Melrose) find such another docile slave?—But pooh! it was ridiculous. In another week Maria would be begging and praying to stay. 'And then,' said the worthy dame to herself, 'I will not be conciliated in a moment; I will make her drink the cup of humiliation to the very lees.'

Maria left the room without another word; and, having put on her outdoor clothes, proceeded into the village—a thing she would not have dared to do under ordinary circumstances, but rebellion was rife in her heart, and she cared not whether Mrs Melrose were pleased or the reverse. She directed her steps at once to Mr Heavysides' house.

'My dear Miss Stonor,' the old gentleman exclaimed heartily, 'I am most pleased to see you. It is indeed kind of you to come so promptly in answer to my request.'

Maria smiled, and said nothing.

'Miss Maria,' went on the old man, and he took the little woman's hand in his and pressed it gently—a very different pressure from the one he had bestowed on Maria's mistress the day before—'Miss Maria,' he repeated, 'are you happy with Mrs Melrose?'

Maria looked down, but remained silent. Mrs Melrose was certainly not very kind to her, but her heart was too loyal to disparage the woman whose bread she ate.

'Ah! I see,' Mr Heavysides proceeded; 'you do not like to say. Well, my dear, I honour you for it; but I am afraid you are not happy, and, my dear, I want to make you happier—at least I try to persuade myself I do. Nevertheless, I believe I'm nothing but a selfish old fellow, and that it's my own comfort I'm thinking about all the while.—Miss Maria, will you marry me? I'm a cross-grained, grumpy wretch, with powers of making myself extraordinarily disagreeable; but I want somebody to cosset and make much of me; and if only you'll come to me, Miss Maria, I'll alter—upon my word, I will.'

Maria was crying softly to herself.

'Don't cry! don't cry!' implored the old man. 'Why should you cry?'

'You are so good,' murmured the little woman. 'Rubbish! Bosh! Nonsense!' he exclaimed, looking very fierce. 'Pooh! Fiddle-dee-dee!'

And then the two fell a-talking; and little by little Maria forgot to cry, as she told her future husband about the events of the past two days. Mr Heavysides was greatly tickled, especially when Maria said with much innocence: 'There's one thing I cannot understand: Mrs Melrose told me that the name of the lady you were going to marry was well known to me; but I am sure I was very far from her thoughts.'

Then her sexagenarian lover recounted to Maria what had passed between himself and the widow, and though Maria said, 'Fie, for shame!' she could not forbear to smile.

'And now, my dear, listen to me,' began Mr Heavysides, when he had laughed at Mrs Melrose to his heart's contentment. 'I don't know how you are off for money, and I don't want to know; I don't suppose she'—meaning the widow—'gives you too much; but you must take this to buy yourself what you require for the wedding.' And he opened a desk and took from it a fifty-pound note, which he pressed into her hand. '—Another thing, my dear: you must give Mrs Melrose a month's wages in lieu of notice, and leave her house at once—this very day. Telegraph to your sister in Cornwall that you are going to stay a few weeks with her, if she can find room for you. I'll see about the banns, and we'll be married in three weeks. I'll have no license; every one shall know that we're going to be married. It will give them a longer time in which to say, "There's no fool like an old fool."'

On reaching home, Maria found Mrs Melrose just sitting down to luncheon. 'Maria,' she asked with icy politeness, 'may I venture to inquire where you have been all this time?'

'In the village on some business,' replied the companion.

'And pray, how was it that you did not ask my permission before going?' demanded Mrs Melrose.

'Because I did not think it probable you would give me it,' Maria retorted boldly.

'How dare you answer me like that?' cried the infuriated woman. 'How dare you?' she reiterated, her true nature—that of the virago—coming to the surface, at the same time rising with clenched fist and advancing towards the really terrified Maria, as if about to fell her to the ground.

Just then the door opened, and in hobbled Mr Heavysides. Of all people in the world he was the very last whom Mrs Melrose desired to see at that moment. Try as she would, she could not compose her features to a natural expression.

The old man stood speechless with amazement. 'Goodness me!' he at length gasped out, 'are you ill? What is the matter?'

'Matter?—matter enough!' fumed Mrs Melrose, unable to repress her spleen. 'This woman, this Maria Stonor, who has lived beneath my roof for the last eight years, to whom I have been more than a sister, whom I have invariably treated as an equal—penniless dependent though she is—this woman, I say, has dared to grossly insult me in my own house.'

'Gracious!' ejaculated Maria, 'what have I said?'

'Said, minx?' retorted Mrs Melrose; 'said? Why, you?—'

'Mrs Melrose,' Mr Heavysides interpolated, calmly, 'I had not intended to make it public quite so soon, but your remarks compel me to inform you that Maria Stonor is my future wife.'

Had a thunderbolt fallen at her feet, the widow could not have been more dumfounded. She was literally aghast. The room spun round with her. This, indeed, was the ruin of all her hopes, of her cherished ambition. With an effort, she pulled herself together. Her mind was chaos, a cataclysm; but one idea at last took definite shape, standing out clearly amidst the overthrow of all her plans: Maria must be conciliated. It would never do to be ill friends with the future Mrs Heavysides—a person able, were she so disposed, to confer many a favour on the widow.

Never had Mrs Melrose detested human being as she detested Maria Stonor at that moment, and never had she addressed her in more honeyed accents. 'My dearest Marie,' she cried—though she could not prevent her lips twitching, or banish the ominous glitter from her eyes which belied her words—'this is truly a pleasant surprise for me, the more so from its very unexpectedness. Allow me to congratulate you, Marie. When is the wedding to take place? You'll be married from my house, of course? I cannot say how glad I am that you are going to settle and have a home of your own at last.—I was only joking just now,' she explained, turning to the bridegroom elect. 'I knew you would see it was merely my fun—for Marie has been a faithful little companion to me; a dear good girl, if a trifle flighty and wayward sometimes; and we have never had a really cross word since you first came to me—have we, child?'

Maria was not deceived by this sudden change of manner, but having a peace-loving disposition, that disliked the idea of being unfriendly with any one, she took Mrs Melrose's words in good part, and cordially thanked her for her good wishes.

The following morning the now happy dependent escaped from the thralldom in which her mistress had so long held her, and betook herself to her sister's home in Cornwall, whence in due course she set out on her honeymoon, a bright and joyous bride. The future stretched out fairly before her. She had done for ever with the dependence of genteel slavery.

The wily Mrs Melrose, whose attempts to entangle Mr Heavysides had been too palpable to escape comment, spent the entire three weeks preceding Maria's marriage in disarming the sarcastic pity of her acquaintance.

'I know you thought, my dear,' she was wont to say with apparent frankness, 'that I was setting my cap at my sweet Marie's fiancé; and she and I had many a laugh together over it. The truth is I was for ever sounding my little friend's praises into his ears.' And she repeated this so often, that in time she half-believed that it was so, and prided herself not a little on having brought about the match.

And as neither Mr nor Mrs Heavysides cared to contradict her, it came to be an accepted fact

in Wychford that it was by Mrs Melrose's agency that Maria had so comfortable a home; and many a bashful mother wished she knew a Mrs Melrose to do the same for her daughter.

ILLUSTRIOUS HANDWRITING.

'EVERY man,' says Lord Chesterfield in one of his Letters—'every man who has the use of his eyes and of his right hand can write whatever hand he pleases.' Lord Chesterfield was in his own day 'the glass of fashion and the mould of form,' and wrote an excellent hand himself; but his dictum is far too sweeping. For, though

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learnt to dance,

there are some people who find good handwriting unattainable in spite of the most persevering efforts. For instance, Byron's penmanship was rude and unfinished in youth, and in later life it became wretched. Macaulay, too, though he polished his periods with the greatest care, wrote an unlovely scrawl. It may be supposed that Dean Stanley had 'the use of his eyes and of his right hand,' but his 'copy' was so illegible that the printers charged half-a-crown a sheet extra for setting it up. The late Lord Houghton, however, put them all in the shade; his handwriting was so ineffably bad that it was often a sheer impossibility to read it.

In olden times the doughty barons of England wielded the sword and the battle-axe with prodigious vigour, but disdained the pen as fit only for monks and priests. Even kings were sometimes lamentably ignorant. Henry I. had indeed some taste for literature and lampreys; but his great-grandson, King John, of unhappy memory, was not similarly blessed. The original 'Magna Charta,' which may still be seen in the British Museum, does not appear to be signed by the king or any of his barons with their own hands. Possibly some of them may have been reluctant to remove their steel gloves; though there is no doubt that many a proud noble of that age was unable to sign his name. Later on, however, it was not considered a disgrace for the sovereign to know 'the three Rs.' Henry VIII. wrote a firm, bold hand, as might be expected from his temper. Queen Elizabeth wrote a pretty hand in her youth, but as she grew older it became more angular and irregular. The chirography of Mary, Queen of Scots, was like herself, elegant and graceful. Cromwell's hand was bold and determined: the conqueror of Naseby and Worcester, of King, Lords, and Commons, was not likely to hold a hesitating pen. Charles II. wrote quickly and carelessly; he was too fond of pleasure to take pains. George IV.'s hand was large and flowing—a credit to 'the first gentleman in Europe.' Queen Victoria's writing shows the effects of age, but she still makes a capital signature.

Napoleon I. was never distinguished for excellence of penmanship. When he became Emperor he used to sign his name—'Napoleon'—at full length, though the signature was even then not remarkable for beauty. Later on it dwindled to 'Nap.' Still later, a crooked hieroglyph, bearing

some distant resemblance to an N, was the Emperor's sign-manual. His writing was indeed so hopelessly bad that Josephine is said to have taken one of his letters from Germany for a map of the seat of war! The Third Napoleon wrote a good legible hand.

As a rule, great generals have been but indifferent scribes. Washington, however, wrote a good hand; and so did Wellington in early life, but in his old age it became practically undecipherable.

Poetic handwriting is of various degrees of excellence. Moore, Rogers, Coleridge, and Wordsworth all wrote a fair hand. Gray took almost as much pains with his caligraphy as he did with his 'Elegy,' which cost him seven years' labour. Addison wrote a large, clear hand, the letters well formed, but each too proud or too coy to touch its neighbour. Burns wrote a large, bold, manly hand: there is vigorous independence in every stroke of the pen. The Ettrick Shepherd's writing was crooked and ill formed. Leigh Hunt wrote his charming essays in a charming hand. Thomas Campbell's writing was sloping and not graceful: it lacked the force and fire which one would expect from the author of 'Ye Mariners of England.' W. C. Bryant wrote a small, carefully finished hand; while N. P. Willis wrote his 'Pencillings by the Way' as if he were always in a hurry. H. W. Longfellow's writing was upright, round, open, heavy—a boon to printers. Bayard Taylor wrote a very fine hand. Lord Tennyson polished his poetry with the most loving care. So fastidious was he that he had his poems set up in type, to see how they looked in print before sending them to the publisher. His handwriting corresponded to his poetry in elegance, beauty, and finish. Henrik Ibsen, the Norse poet, writes a round, clear hand, sloping backwards. Miss Olive Schreiner says of him that 'he and George Meredith are the only men of modern times who understand women.' Nevertheless, Ibsen's portraiture of the ladies is sometimes the reverse of flattering.

Notwithstanding the lapse of time, Sir Walter Scott still occupies a commanding position amongst our novelists. In early life he wrote a legible hand, though, being

A clerk foredoomed his father's soul to cross,
Who pens a stanza when he should engross,

his stanzas displayed more character than his chirography. Towards the close of his career, when the great mind became obscured, his manuscript was crabbed, blurred, and altered so as to be almost unreadable. Fenimore Cooper appears to have written his numerous novels with a burnt stick. Nathaniel Hawthorne's handwriting was irregular and indistinct. Dickens says he never copied, always sending the original draft of his works to the printer. The printer, however, would have been better pleased if Dickens had copied; for his manuscript is written in a galloping slapdash style, frequently blurred and altered, and very difficult for the compositor to set up. W. M. Thackeray's manuscript is entirely the reverse. It is free from blots and erasures; the writing is clear, neat, regular, and nearly upright, the words well apart: in short, a pleasure to read.

Generally speaking, our statesmen have been pro-

ficient in penmanship, though Lord Brougham's writing in his old age became nearly illegible. Pitt, Fox, Canning, Peel, Lord Derby, Earl Russell, all wrote a good hand. Lord Palmerston was distinguished among his colleagues for the beauty of his caligraphy. In his earlier years Mr Gladstone's writing was clear and regular; and age has not withered the variety of his mind or deprived his right hand of its cunning.

Voltaire and Rousseau were both remarkable for clear and beautiful caligraphy. 'Junius' wrote a fine, flexible, suggestive hand, though it failed to suggest the writer's identity. R. W. Emerson wrote a careless, irregular scrawl. O. W. Holmes writes a neat, clear, dainty hand, whose beauty the wear and tear of time have not destroyed. The genial Autocrat of the Breakfast Table, who has lately given us 'Over the Teacups,' has written with the same gold pen for the last twenty years; and may that good gray head continue for another twenty years to enrich our literature and our lives with its noble thoughts!

About the beginning of the eighteenth century, ladies wrote a large, round, open hand, not much unlike the Italian. As the century grew older, the light, angular style of our grandmothers and great-grandmothers came into vogue. Feminine handwriting was then painfully uniform; individuality was almost unknown. Latterly, however, our girls have asserted their independence in this direction, as in so many others, and the Civil Service style is now much affected. Among ladies distinguished for the beauty of their penmanship—or penwomanship—was Charlotte Brontë, who wrote a very small, very delicate, and carefully finished hand. Mrs Hemans wrote in a free, flowing style. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's manuscript was very neat, and carefully punctuated, the writing being distinct and legible, though the letters were not well joined.

In 1833 a Baltimore literary paper offered two prizes—one for the best tale, and one for the best poem. The adjudicators attracted by the beauty and distinctness of the writing on one of the papers sent in, unanimously decided that the prizes should be paid to 'the first of geniuses who had written legibly. Not another manuscript was unfolded.' So says Rufus W. Griswold in his biography of that wayward American genius, Edgar Allan Poe. According to Mr Ingram, however, this is not only erroneous, but absolutely false; and indeed it seems on the face of it incredible that a number of cultured gentlemen and leading citizens should dishonour themselves by deciding the merits of papers they had not examined. Mr Ingram has succeeded in unearthing the published award, and therein it is stated: 'Amongst the prose articles were many of various and distinguished merit; but the singular force and beauty of those sent by the author of "The Tales of the Folio Club," leave us no room for hesitation.' So, after all, Poe did not owe his success to his penmanship, exquisite as that undoubtedly was.

Some years afterwards, Poe, in a series of 'Papers on Autography,' maintained that a man's character may be discovered in his handwriting. This thesis he enforced and illustrated with marvellous ingenuity. His genius was decidedly analytical, and the inferences he drew from the

specimens he gave were very often accurate. While admitting that there is much truth in Poe's theory, it is equally true that handwriting is in many cases no certain index to character. The weather, the health, the nerves, feeling, passion, may agitate the mind and make the pen forget its wonted firmness.

If individual character influences individual handwriting, national character should influence national handwriting. Authorities tell us that such is the case; that the art of the Italian, the pride of the Spaniard, the vivacity of the Frenchman, are all displayed in their penmanship. It may be so; but, as a rule, it would take an expert or an enthusiast to tell the difference between the writing of the shrewd Scotsman, the staid Englishman, and the lively Irishman. German handwriting, however, is truly indicative of the national character: it requires nearly as much patience to read it as to write it. On the other hand, one seeks in vain to discover the temper of a Jew from the dots and points of Hebrew, or to decipher the character of Mr Pitman from the phonetic alphabet.

In China, printing and writing are always respected, and the autographs of high dignitaries are revered. Upon ceremonious occasions a great man is attended by his servant, who hands him a small piece of paper every time he wishes to blow his nose. To use a pocket-handkerchief would be a Western innovation, and a shocking derogation from the dignity of a Mandarin. Printed or written paper is, however, never used for this purpose, being considered too sacred. The use of red ink is forbidden to all but the Emperor, who signs official documents in this flaming colour. An autograph of Kang III., the contemporary of Louis XIV., has been sold in Peking for more than forty pounds. The Chinese seem to have anticipated the fashions and foibles as well as the arts and sciences of our own day. Their golden youth, with long pigtailed and almond eyes, sat at competitive examinations when the conquering Norman was riding roughshod over our Saxon forefathers. Verily, there is nothing new under the sun!

IN AUTUMN DAYS.

In Autumn days, when leaves are shed
In eddies, amber-tinged and red,
Along the coverts of the wold—
When ferns are turning ruddy gold,
And acorns patter overhead—

When in the shallows of its bed
The river sighs dispirited,
There is an ancient legend told,
In Autumn days:

A tale of one who has been led
Among the lilies, forest-wed,
To nourish memories of old,
Who wakes to find the nights are cold,
The birds have flown, the flowers are dead,
In Autumn days.

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

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BEYOND THE VERGE.

Two intrepid travellers have recently started on journeys of discovery, both having the North Pole as their ultimate bourne. Of the two, Lieutenant Peary has chosen the more prosaic route, across Greenland with dogs and sledges; he also took with him some Colorado donkeys, but these have already succumbed to storm and cold. Mrs Peary and one other woman accompany this expedition. Mrs Peary joined her husband in his first expedition to the north coast of Greenland in 1891, having been the first of the weaker sex to tempt the perils of Polar discovery.

Meanwhile, Dr Nansen, the brave enthusiast, leaving his young wife and child behind him, has started in his good ship the 'Fram' on a voyage which he believes will occupy at least five years, during the greater part of which he expects to be frozen up on a moving mass of pack-ice, and to be thus carried by ocean currents across the Polar basin and back along the coast of Greenland. It is a bold and romantic enterprise, and deserves success; but most geographers doubt the existence of the currents upon which Nansen relies, and shake their heads ominously as to the fate of the explorer. And indeed, should there be any truth in the theory of a certain American, neither of the explorers can ever reach the Pole, for the very simple and sufficient reason, that there is no North Pole to reach.

Americus Symmes, the son of a well-known but eccentric father, in order to show his filial piety, according to the 'San Francisco Chronicle,' is organising an expedition to follow the wild animals across Greenland to 'Symmesonia,' an imaginary land, with a delightful climate, and teeming with enormous herds of reindeer, musk-oxen, and other animals, which he believes to exist in the centre of the earth, in a region which he hopes to open out for emigration!

The theory of Symmes's father was, that the earth is a hollow sphere, habitable, and inhabited in the interior; and that, after passing eighty degrees north latitude, vessels cross what he

denominated 'the Verge,' and sail southwards into a cup-like hollow leading into the interior of the earth. This quaint and altogether untenable theory caused considerable amusement at the time it was first propounded, in 1818, by its originator, Captain John Cleves Symmes, of the United States Army, who sent out a circular to all the learned Societies in Europe and America couched in the following terms: 'TO ALL THE WORLD.—I declare the earth is hollow and habitable within, containing a number of concentric spheres, one within the other, and that it is open at the Poles twelve or sixteen degrees. I pledge my life in support of this truth, and am ready to explore the hollow, if the world will support and aid me in the undertaking. . . . I ask one hundred brave companions, well equipped, to start from Siberia in the fall season with reindeer and sleighs on the ice of the frozen sea. I engage we find a warm and rich land, stocked with thrifty vegetables and animals, if not men, on reaching one degree northward of latitude eighty-two degrees. We will return in the succeeding spring.'

But Captain Symmes could not get together his one hundred trusty followers; and after lecturing for years and petitioning Congress many times in vain for aid, he died in 1829, and his project sank into the limbo of forgetfulness, excepting that his grave is still marked by a hollow globe of marble with the inscription: 'Captain John Symmes was a philosopher, and the originator of Symmes's Theory of Concentric Spheres and Polar Voids. He contended that the earth is hollow, and habitable within.'

One would have imagined that with the fuller knowledge of the Arctic regions acquired since the death of this eccentric philosopher, the belief in 'Symmes's Hole' would have entirely died out; but, on the contrary, it seems to be reviving in America; and his son, who must be an old man, is even now preparing to lead an expedition, for which he says he has had seventy or eighty volunteers, in order to prove the truth of his father's theory. 'The expedition,' he says, 'is for

no other purpose than to follow the wild animals out of Greenland into Symmesonia—the name given to that country by my father. Where the animals go, we can certainly follow, as we will go prepared for snow and ice travel as well as land; and we will have a boat to cross rivers, should we have to do so. No doubt we can live in a great measure off the animals on our travels. They will soon lead us into a mild climate, where the soil must be rich and productive. The only reward that we expect is that, if we are successful, it will immortalise the whole party, and will open up a new world for emigration.

The earth, according to Symmes, is constructed somewhat on the plan of those concentric balls so ingeniously carved by the Chinese, at which we have all marvelled: there are spheres within spheres, divided from other spheres by very light gaseous matter, the water of the ocean in places percolating right through to the centre or great mid-plane; and in like manner the earth in certain parts connects the separate spheres, and holds them together. Around the great central hole north and south, the ice and snow are accumulated, forming what we know as the Arctic and Antarctic Circles; and these are denominated 'verges,' and are supposed to occupy twenty-five degrees of latitude. But this icy barrier once passed, Symmes imagines an open Polar Sea, dipping gradually into the centre of the earth, and forming the happy breeding and feeding place of myriads of fish, from whales to herrings, the surrounding land enjoying a delightful climate, and teeming with so-called Arctic animals—reindeer, foxes, hares, &c., all finding therein shelter from the cold, and ample space for grazing on the rich verdure supposed to abound there.

Unfortunately for this hypothesis, Lieutenant Lockwood, who, in Greeley's expedition, passed beyond this supposed verge, and attained to latitude 83° 23' 8" north, and should therefore have entered upon Symmes's charming Polar Under-world with its myriads of fish and terrestrial animals, found even in May nothing but ice and snow, with here and there a scanty vegetation, just sufficient to sustain a few hares, ptarmigan, and snow-buntings, which, with lemmings, bears, and foxes, seem to have been the only animals seen during sixty days' march; whilst the mean temperature was below zero Fahrenheit during forty-five days, and that in April and May, when in those latitudes the sun would be above the horizon almost continuously. Looking out over the ocean towards the Pole, no fine open sea, teeming with whales, seals, and shoals of fish, presented itself, but, far as the eye could reach, 'a vast expanse of snow and broken ice.' Nevertheless, crustaceans were dredged up, tracks of wolf and fox found, and hares and ptarmigan met with—showing that life probably exists even to the Pole, although wholly insufficient to supply with food even a single sledge-party; so that Lockwood and his companions were obliged to return earlier than they wished, in order to avoid starvation, having eaten only at intervals of fifteen, twenty-four, and nineteen hours, to enable them to travel farther; whilst their dogs were reduced to desperation by famine, and could not

be kept from thieving and gnawing everything, even to the ammunition.

So far, therefore, there seems in actual fact nothing to support the theory of Symmes as to the open cup-shaped hollow of the Polar Sea, and the abundance of life therein and on the coasts adjacent. Still, traces do exist of open water in the Polar seas, especially in a great tide-crack, as it is called, which varies from a few feet to several hundred yards in width, and in the moving ice which has been seen and felt by many Arctic voyagers.

It is this movement of the Polar ice-pack drifting always southwards, thus proving the existence of Arctic currents, which has encouraged Dr Nansen to attempt the hazardous feat of reaching the Pole by allowing his vessel to be frozen up near the New Siberian Islands, where the 'Jeannette' was sunk in 1881, believing that the moving ice-pack will carry him and his vessel across the ocean close to the Pole, and bring him down south, along the coast of Greenland, after the lapse of three or four years, as seems to have been the case in regard to some relics from the 'Jeannette' which were picked up on the coast of Greenland three years after the loss of the vessel.

Mr Seeböhm, in his presidential address to the Geographical Section at the late meeting of the British Association, which with its six polar charts illustrative of the temperature, vegetation, &c., of the Arctic regions is of great interest, pointed out very clearly the more substantial reasons for Nansen's faith in Arctic currents. Not only do the Mackenzie and the great Siberian rivers flow into the Polar basin, but the Gulf Stream three or four hundred miles wide, enters it between Spitzbergen and Finnmark, supplying the Norwegians at Hammerfest with driftwood from the Gulf of Mexico, whilst to compensate for this immense influx two return currents from Arctic regions pass one on each side of Greenland, bringing the Eskimos firewood from the forests of Siberia.

Mr Symmes will do well to await Dr Nansen's report before starting on his quixotic expedition. Nansen had at least some reason for his belief, and the support of two or three names well known in Arctic research, and he did not start with any unfounded hope of delightful climate and abundance of food supply, but prudently took with him everything necessary for his support during his long and untried voyage of discovery; and if he fails, it will not be for want of forethought. He knows from experience the difficulties and dangers which await him; and we all trust his courage and enthusiasm may be rewarded with the success they deserve. Meanwhile, we can but marvel that the wild, bleak, and desolate regions surrounding the Poles should have called forth so many daring adventurers to endeavour to probe the mysteries which lie at the 'Back of the North Wind.' The attraction doubtless lies in the unsolved mystery, which gives scope for much speculation, varying in character according to the religious or philosophical bias of the speculator. Hence, whilst Symmes and his followers expect to find a cup-like hollow at the Poles, leading into the interior of the earth, another American, Dr W. F. Warren, writes a book to prove that the Garden of Eden was situ-

ated at the North Pole. He shows by many quotations from ancient authors of various nationalities, that a mountain, which he places at the North Pole, was regarded as the abode of the gods: the Olympus of the Greeks, the Mount Meru of the Hindus, the 'Mountain of the World' of the Akkadians, the Pearl Mountain of the Chinese, the Mount Sion of the Bible; and that upon this mountain, at the very apex of the world, was supposed to stand a pillar, which he identifies with the earth's axis, and which in legendary lore connected the earthly with the heavenly paradise, and was symbolised as a tree, by which the faithful ascended to the abode of the blessed: the Tree of Life of Moses, the Yggdrasil of the Scandinavians, the Sacred Tree of many other ancient races, the Bean-stalk of the nursery tale.

Dr Warren, like Symmes, believes in a delightful climate and an exuberance of life at the North Pole; but he is content to assign these to the Miocene period of geologists. In this he is in accordance with verified facts, for the discovery of large seams of coal, and of fossil trees including magnolias, both in Greenland and in Grinnell Land, testify to the former existence of a semi-tropical climate, where now all is ice and desolation; but Miocene man is at present only a dream of anthropologists; and to consign Adam and the Garden of Eden to the North Pole in Miocene times is to place them very decidedly 'Beyond the Verge.'

P O M O N A.*

CHAPTER XIV.

The sun of love shines on her; all the air
Is warm with adulation; only she
Like marble statue flushed and made more fair
By very radiance, still stands cold and free
From sign of yielding.

EMMA RHODES.

'You won't expect me to-morrow,' Maurice had said when he parted from Sage, the evening of the private view. 'I have some business to see after in the morning; and in the evening I have promised to dine with that cousin of mine, Mrs Coppleston, in Brook Street. I met her yesterday morning in the Park, and she made me promise to come, though it's a horrid bore. I think if I get a chance this evening, I shall tell her about you and me, Sage. She's such a jolly old girl, and I'm sure you'd like her. She's not a bit stuck up or fine, though she's very well off, and knows all sorts of nice people. I'll take you up to lunch one day. I should like her to know my little girl.'

And Sage agreed, as she would to any proposal that ended like that—only, in her heart of hearts, she wished that Maurice's friends were not all so fashionable; it complicated the future prospect of the little suburban house and the economies to be practised there.

After the exquisite enjoyment of the day before, the ordinary routine of home-life seemed rather dull; and she felt the separation from Maurice ever so much more now that he was in

London, when every footstep outside might be his, or knock at the door announce his coming. It is often more difficult to endure a slight separation than a greater one, parting for a day than for a year, the distance of a few hundred yards than that of a continent. Perhaps this is because the heart has not time to learn the sad lesson of patience, and in the greatest separation of all—though, is it indeed the greatest?—when death us do part, there often springs up in the bereaved a strength of resignation you would not have looked for in some clinging, exacting nature, that could not till then bear her loved one to be out of sight.

And so Sage was crosser that day than the boys had ever known her, and Will was quite electrified at her disgust and indignation at finding his pocket-handkerchief hung to dry in front of the fire, and the energetic way in which she bundled the Pink un and all his belongings out of the way.

Maurice, too, was not perhaps in the very best of humours that day. He had seen the sudden look of disappointment on Sage's face when he had said that she must not expect him next day, and had felt an odd little mixture of compunction and irritation. The former impelled him to say that perhaps he might come for half an hour in the afternoon; the latter prevented him from doing so. It really could not be expected that he should go every day to Dalston—it was such a pilgrimage from any habitable part of London. Sage was the dearest, best of little girls; but, of course, a man had something else to do, and the best of girls are apt to forget this and grow exacting.

As a matter of fact, he had nothing else to do; and he felt remorseful, and perhaps also a little dull, as he sat alone smoking in Ludlow's studio, for Owen had not come back yet, and Maurice had Collins's house to himself; and though it appeared to Sage that he had so many fashionable friends and relations in London, he really had very few, having been abroad so much of his time.

More than once during the day, he was inclined to cast overboard the masculine dignity and prestige of having something else to do, and go and find Sage, being sure—that is the worst of men, they are always so sure, and the annoying part is they are generally right!—that there would be no need of explanations, but that her face would light up with glad welcome; and that she would believe with humble gratitude that he had given the go-by to important business all for her sake.

But he did not yield to this temptation, but took a nap and another pipe, and then it was time to dress for Mrs Coppleston's dinner. There is something particularly exasperating in dressing; but when once evening clothes are donned, the temper generally improves; and by the time Maurice reached Mrs Coppleston's house, his usual amiability was restored, and her pleasant, cordial reception of him was very agreeable.

'You are a good boy to come,' she said. 'You seemed so very uncertain yesterday as to whether you had not some other engagement, that I began to suspect a stronger attraction elsewhere. I have been expecting a note or telegram all day with your excuses; and I don't think I could

ever have spoken to you again. But as you have come, I am going to reward you by sending you down to dinner with one of the prettiest girls of the season. Yes; and one of the richest, too, and as far as is known, heartwhole at present; so, if you play your cards well, Master Maurice, there is no knowing what may happen.'

Maurice was among the earlier arrivals in the pretty, tasteful drawing-room, where the soft light from pink shaded lamps fell on exquisite flowers, and on all the easy, indescribable elegance that pervades some people's rooms, and to which others cannot attain, however much money and thought and pains they bestow on it.

Colonel Coppleston received him as kindly as his wife had done. He was generally known among his acquaintances as Mrs Coppleston's husband, and was well content to play that part in life, having a most unbounded admiration for his more brilliant wife, and no wish to assert any individuality of his own, independent of her.

Maurice was standing talking to him as the other guests arrived, and, being in the recess of one of the windows, did not observe the rest of the company till dinner was announced, and a tap from Mrs Coppleston's fan summoned him to be introduced to the lady he was to take down to dinner. 'Miss Lester, Mr Moore.'

It was Pomona, and Pomona so much the more like her picture as the evening dress of the present day is more classical than the out-of-door morning costume, the hair being dressed in almost exactly the same style, with the big loose knot behind and the soft curls on her forehead.

As they passed down-stairs, Maurice said: 'I had the pleasure of meeting you yesterday at the private view, I believe?'

'Do you mean that you met me myself, or saw this wonderful likeness that my friends tell me one of the pictures bears to me?'

'Both,' he answered. 'I could not fail to observe the likeness.'

'Isn't it a very curious thing? There is something quite uncanny about it, for, do you know? I have never seen the artist. I do not even know his name. Some people think he must have painted it from a photograph of mine; but I do not photograph at all well, and have never had a satisfactory one taken; and the picture is certainly more like me than my photographs are; though, of course, it is very flattering.'

'I do not think that,' Maurice said, looking down at the sweet bright face, whose changing expression no picture could do justice to.

'I did not say that to draw out a compliment. But I should so like to find out more about it. Captain Mostyn has promised to find out who this Mr Ludlow is.'

'I think I can save him the trouble. He is one of my oldest friends.'

'Is he really?' She turned to him with such a delighted look of interest, that Maurice felt he was one of the most fortunate of men, and hoped that the other men at the table saw it and envied him. 'Oh, do tell me about him.'

'He is a splendid fellow; there is no one like him.'

'Is he young?'

'No: fifty, I should say.'

'Where does he live?'

'Generally down at Scar, a little seaside place in Dorsetshire.'

'I don't think I have ever been in Dorsetshire since I was a baby.'

'He has been in London lately.'

'Then do you think he could have seen me?'

'No; I am quite sure he has not, for he must have seen the curious likeness to his picture; and it is all the more curious as I know he had begun painting the central figure more than ten years ago.'

'Really! Are you quite sure of that?'

'Perfectly; for I saw it ten years ago in California, where I was with him something like six months.'

'Then that is conclusive that it was not taken from me, for I was quite a little girl then. Do you know who was his model?'

'No one, as far as I know. I believe he drew it entirely from memory.'

'Of some one he had known?'

'Yes—some one he had known, and who had died.'

'Were all the figures painted from memory?'

'No; the others were from models, and painted more recently.'

'Do you know,' she said, 'that some of my friends are not satisfied with finding the likeness to me, but declare that the girl in the right-hand corner bears an extraordinary resemblance to some of the portraits of our family? But I think this is imagination on their part. I don't mean the little, rosy-cheeked girl; but the pale one in a dull green dress. They never can make out any likeness between me and the Lesters; and I am not sure that I care about it very much, as some of them are decidedly plain.'

'Then I should not think there could be any likeness.'

'Thank you,' she said with a laugh. 'But do not trouble to be so complimentary.—Was the girl in green taken from a regular professional model?'

'Oh no; she was a young lady that Ludlow met down at Scar last year.'

'Do you know her?'

'Yes, a little.'

In looking back in days to come, Maurice wished he had not spoken so indifferently. Without being effusively communicative, he might have conveyed the impression that he knew Sage well; but these coolly spoken words seemed to commit him to appearing merely as a slight acquaintance of the girl he was going to marry.

But at the moment he spoke, how could he tell that he would ever meet that beautiful Miss Lester again, or that it would matter what she thought the relation between him and Sage to be?

'Do you know,' she said, 'there is one remarkable thing in the matter which many, even of my friends, do not know?'

'May I know it?'

'I have a very curious Christian name,' she said.

'I think I heard that lady opposite address you as Mona.'

'Yes,' she answered; 'that is how I am generally called; but it is not my whole name—that is Pomona.'

And here the ladies rose to leave the dinner-table; and in the drawing-room Maurice had no further opportunity of conversation with her.

(To be continued.)

A HERMIT NATION.

BURIED deep in the heart of Asia, and separated from the burning plains of India and from the populous regions of China by stupendous ranges of snowy mountains, there lies a wonderful land. This land is Tibet. Its physical features are most remarkable, for the country seems to consist of a vast central plateau, the greater portion of which lies at a higher elevation than the top of Mont Blanc, and from which descend on all sides great valleys, traversed by the Hoang-ho, the Yangtze-kiang, the Brahmaputra, and the Indus. The Tibetans themselves are a morose and gloomy race, and, sunk in poverty and filth, seem to be degraded members of the human family. But perhaps it is the religion of the Tibetans which is the strangest feature of the country, for the Tibetans are Buddhists of a most extraordinary character. All over the mountains in the inhabited portions of Tibet are scattered the convents of the Lamas, which are full of monks and nuns, and are ruled by abbesses, and by Lamas in red and yellow robes, with mitres on their heads, and with tridents and praying-wheels in their hands. Multitudes of pilgrims traverse the roads which lead to the holy city of Lhasa, the capital of the country; and in the great temple at Lhasa, which is splendidly adorned, the Buddhist priests and monks chant the service, in the presence of crowds of devout worshippers.

Another wonderful thing connected with Tibet is the jealous way in which it is guarded by its inhabitants, and the extraordinary care taken by them to prevent Europeans from entering the country. On the side of India every mountain-pass is carefully watched, and any European who attempts to enter Tibet from this direction is instantly turned back. On the side of China the frontier is guarded with equal care, and so perfect is the cordon in this quarter, that although the borders of Tibet may be reached, they cannot be passed.

Sir Joseph Hooker travelled for many days through the forest-clad mountains of Sikkin towards the Tibetan frontier; but his coming had been announced, and a guard of Tibetan soldiers met him and his attendants on the frontier, and compelled them immediately to retrace their steps. Dr Andrew Wilson passed the Tibetan frontier, but was stopped at the first village by a crowd of Tibetan women, who refused to allow him to pitch his tents; and as the women were supported by the men, he was compelled to turn back.

The Indian Government has lately trained Hindu Pandits to travel in Tibet and make scientific observations; but even this has to be done with great secrecy, and their scientific instruments have to be carefully concealed. On the frontier, these Hindus are strictly examined by the Tibetans, and are frequently turned back. Often, however, they are successful; and after traversing unknown portions of Tibet, they return to India and report their discoveries to the officials

of the British Government, by whom they are rewarded. The most remarkable journey undertaken by these trained Hindus was performed by the Pandit Nain Singh in 1874. He entered Great Tibet from the west, and leaving the headwaters of the Indus, ascended to a vast tableland, divided by a range of mountains from the Brahmaputra on the south, and stretching away for an unknown distance towards the north. Having reached Lake Namcho, he crossed the snowy mountains which rise along its southern border. Then he entered the habitable portion of Tibet, with its towns, convents, and monasteries, and ultimately made his way into Assam, and thence to Calcutta.

In 1889 two French travellers, M. Bonvalot and Prince Henry of Orleans, undertook to enter Tibet from the north; and they have given us an interesting account of their wanderings in a book lately published—*Across Tibet*, by Gabriel Bonvalot. They started from Semipalatinsk, in Siberia, in June 1889, and made their way to Kuldja, an important town just within the Chinese dominions. Here they made the acquaintance of Father Dedeken of the Belgian Mission, who agreed to join them, as he was returning to Europe. Leaving Kuldja, they first crossed the snowy chain of the Thian Shan, the giant peaks of which, known as Bogda-Oola and Tengri-Khan, reach an elevation of twenty-one thousand feet; and traversing a barren country in which the vegetation was limited to the banks of the streams, they arrived at the little Chinese town of Kourla, and here their troubles began. The governor of Kourla professed friendship, but secretly informed the Chinese leading official of the district concerning the European travellers. Shortly afterwards, an order arrived from this great man saying that the Frenchmen must be turned back; but M. Bonvalot and his companions refused to retrace their steps. Chinese soldiers then arrived to stop them, and orders were sent in all directions for the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts to report in what direction the Europeans were journeying, so that they might be turned back. The travellers, however, bravely set out; and although the governor of Kourla threatened to use force to drive them back, he shrank from carrying out his menace, and the travellers proceeded on their journey.

They now descended into the basin of the Tarim, which is a wilderness, and is being slowly buried beneath the sands which are drifting over it from the desert of Gobi. Vegetation and agriculture are limited to the banks of the streams, and these are fast drying up. The Tarim as it runs to the east becomes narrower and shallower, until at last it loses itself amidst a great swamp of reeds which once was called Lake Lob. Even this swamp is drying up, and the aspect of the whole country—which is being fast buried beneath the sand—is melancholy in the extreme. Great towns formerly existed here, but the drifting sand has buried them, and the whole of this part of Asia presents a melancholy spectacle of decay and desolation. The wild camel is found in this neighbourhood. It was formerly abundant near Lake Lob and along the slopes of the Altyn Tagh; but it now exists only in the desert east of the Tarim. It runs rapidly, and is very sagacious;

and the natives hunt it, and sell its skins to travellers.

At last, on November 17, 1889, the adventurous Frenchmen left all signs of human dwellings and human occupations behind them, and bidding adieu to the little town of Tcharkalik on that day, they plunged into the wilderness in which they were to wander—amidst fearful privations—for a long and dreary period.

They first ascended the Altyn Tagh or 'Golden Mountains,' which constitute the southern boundary of the basin of the Tarim, and form the first and lower rampart of the great Tibetan table-land on the north. Great gorges, and barren slopes covered with stones, and sandy ravines devoid of vegetation, spread out on all sides. Still, though winter fast closed in upon them, the explorers pushed on, and at last found themselves deep in Tibet. Their sufferings now became most severe. They were in a wilderness of gigantic mountains, which was totally uninhabited. The snow-storms raged around them day after day, and so awful was the cold that Fahrenheit's thermometer often marked twenty, thirty, and even forty degrees below zero, and on one occasion it actually sank to forty-eight degrees below zero!

Notwithstanding the horrors of the climate, the travellers saw many wild animals in these Tibetan solitudes. Myriads of antelopes careered over the desolate plains; great wild-sheep with splendid curved horns stood on the summits of the rocks; foxes and hares ran about the ravines; and wolves frequently made the lonely nights resound with their dismal howlings. The great wild yak was often met with. Sometimes a single one was seen standing on the top of some rocky eminence gazing fixedly at the travellers, and on other occasions great herds of these magnificent animals were discerned on the mountain sides. The wild ass was also plentiful, numbers of them galloping over the barren wastes, and often congregating in troops. Nor were birds absent: partridges were heard calling on the mountain sides, crows flocked around the camping-places, and great eagles soared overhead. Man alone was totally absent from these solitudes.

As the expedition advanced it attained a higher elevation, and at length a mountain range was crossed the height of which was estimated at twenty-six thousand feet, while the plains around were from seventeen to eighteen thousand feet above the sea. In the midst of this icy wilderness, M. Bonvalot and his companions discovered several extinct volcanoes, from which descended great beds of lava and cinders. One of the volcanoes they named Mont Elisée Reclus, and another Mont Ruysbruk; whilst in the midst of the lava-fields which flowed from these volcanoes they found a beautiful lake. Another sign of volcanic action was the hot springs and geysers which were often encountered. Some of the geysers rivalled those of Iceland in size, but were fast frozen by the intense cold. Lakes were often met with, some of which were salt; in fact, salt lakes fast drying up were continually discovered; and a plain crossed by the travellers was found to be covered with salt a foot in depth.

And so for many a dreary week the travellers struggled on, going ever towards the south, but apparently only getting deeper into the awful wilderness. Their camels and horses died one

after another; and at last death fastened upon their attendants. A camel-driver was the first to perish. Unable to resist the fearful cold, he gradually sank; and his body was buried in the ice, in the midst of a blinding tempest of snow. It was the first death in the caravan, but unhappily not the last. The only hope of saving the lives of the remaining members of the little company now lay in their pushing on as rapidly as possible, and in meeting with some human beings, whom they now longed to see. But New-year's day approached, and still no signs of Man. In fact, this part of Tibet is quite uninhabited during the winter; and it is only in the summer that the pastoral tribes bring their flocks and herds to graze on these great plains, which on the approach of winter they abandon for the milder regions farther to the south.

Presently, the hopes of the travellers were raised by their seeing the remains of human encampments which had not been long abandoned, and they cheered themselves with the thought that they should soon see human beings. At last, on the 31st of January, one of their attendants came running to M. Bonvalot and his companions in a state of great delight, and joyfully declared that he had seen a man! It was even so. A Tibetan was approaching, and he was the first human being—except the members of the caravan—whom the travellers had seen for nearly two months; and worn out as they were with hunger and exhaustion, the sight of a man was truly delightful. Several Tibetans came up and conferred with the travellers; but nothing definite was gained from them. On the next day more Tibetans arrived, riding on shaggy mountain ponies; but they were reserved and suspicious. They at once tried to turn the travellers back, and their chiefs declared that they would be punished if they allowed the Europeans to proceed. M. Bonvalot and his friends were determined to go on; for to return in their condition would have been certain death; and so they pressed forward as fast as their exhausted frames and dying horses and camels would permit. The country seemed to be getting less savage, but it still consisted of great snowy mountains and open plains without the least cultivation, on which the black tents of shepherds rose here and there, and herds of wild asses were roaming to and fro. At last, on February 3, 1890, the travellers gained the summit of a lofty range, and looking to the south they saw the great Lake Namcho—the Holy Lake of the Tibetans—lying beneath them. It was a glorious spectacle. The broad expanse of the lake stretched away like the sea; promontories ran out into its bosom, and islands rose from its surface in many places. On its southern shore rose the great snow-clad mountains of Ningling-Tangla, whose towering peaks attain an elevation of twenty-five thousand feet, and are looked upon with awe and veneration by the Tibetans.

By this time the neighbourhood was thoroughly aroused; messengers had been sent to Lhasa, and horsemen were observed in all directions on the plains, and they surrounded the travellers on every side. These latter were now so weak that farther progress seemed impossible; and the Tibetans would neither give nor sell them any-

thing, and seemed determined to let them die of starvation. Their meat was frozen so hard that they had to chop it with a hatchet, and all their remaining beasts were dying. And now another of their attendants fell ill, and rapidly grew worse. In the darkness of the wintry night the survivors watched round the sufferer, but could do nothing. As the wolves howled round the camp, the dying man felt his end approaching, and calling his comrades round him, he bade them all farewell; then he fell backwards, and his spirit fled. They buried him at the dawn of day, and raised a pile of stones over his grave.

At this critical juncture when the caravan seemed doomed, an *amban* or petty Tibetan magistrate arrived from Lhasa, and peremptorily ordered the travellers to retrace their steps. This they refused to do, and they declared that they would rather die than return through the awful wilderness. The *amban* was perplexed, and declared that he would be put to death if the Frenchmen did not turn back. Ultimately, he agreed to write to his superiors at Lhasa for instructions. Time passed on, and by-and-by a great caravan, containing the leading Tibetan officials from Lhasa, arrived at the place where the travellers were encamped. These important personages—who were the religious and civil governors of the country—proceeded to encamp in great state; and at a solemn conference they ordered the Europeans to leave Tibet by the road they had entered it. M. Bonvalot and his companions still refused to go back a single step, and matters began to look very critical. At length the Tibetans gave way, and granted permission to the travellers to go to Batang, and thence to Tonquin. They also agreed to supply the Frenchmen with provisions and beasts of burden, and to furnish them with a guide to the frontier. These terms were willingly accepted; and shortly afterwards, provided with horses, yaks, servants, and provisions, the Europeans bade farewell to the Tibetan officials, and started in an easterly direction for the Chinese frontier.

They journeyed along the southern edge of the great Tibetan table-land, now ascending to its broad expanse, and now descending into the deep chasms by which its southern front is furrowed, and through which flow the headwaters of the great rivers of Siam and Cambodia. It was now spring, and the weather was much warmer, while grass and bushes were seen on all sides. Often great views were opened up to north and south; and it was observed that while the mountains to the south were precipitous and heavily snow-clad, those which rose to the north on the great table-land were rounded, and only slightly streaked with snow. At last, on the 14th of April the travellers caught sight of a house, the first they had seen for five months! Shortly after, they had a glimpse of cultivated fields, which they had not seen since they had entered Tibet. The hillsides now were—on the lower slopes—covered with bushes and with fir-trees, the villages were surrounded with cultivated fields, and the dwellings of Buddhist hermits were often seen perched on the tops of the towering crags.

On the 8th of June the travellers reached Batang, on the great river Yang-tze-kiang, and shortly afterwards they arrived at Ta-tsen-lu,

the frontier town of China. Here they had trouble again with the Chinese authorities, and had to submit to many insults. Fortunately, they met at this place Mr Pratt, an Englishman, who undertook to convey their natural-history specimens to Shanghai. Once more they started; and at length arrived safely in Tonquin, and embarking at Haiphong, they reached Hong-kong, and from thence were carried to Marseilles.

PHYLLIS MARSDEN'S LOVE-POEM.

CHAPTER III.

'GRACIOUS! Harry. Wonders never will cease. Here is actually an invitation to dinner from the old hermit.' And Kitty flourished a dainty note in her brother's face.

'What old hermit? This sounds interesting and out of the common,' replied her brother, looking up from the breakfast table.

'Why, Phyllis, of course! At least her father. The note is from Phyllis. Listen! "Papa is most anxious to ask Captain Benson's opinion." Well, really! I do hope you feel flattered. Never shall I forget the old gentleman asking my opinion once! I feel hot whenever I think of it.'

'And what did you do?' asked her brother lazily.

'Never gave him the opportunity of asking another, and never shall, either!—The invitation is for Thursday. Phil won't be home, and I am engaged to dine somewhere, never mind where. So you are the only victim.—Stay; what is over the leaf? "P.S.—I have just remembered Mr Huxtable will not have returned home by Thursday; but do come, Kitty. Captain Benson will be bottled up all the evening with papa, and we can have a long chat."—No, no! Phyllis. Much as I enjoy your society, a long dinner seated next your revered parent would be quite beyond my powers of endurance.' So saying, Mrs Huxtable whisked up her letter and disappeared into her boudoir.

Captain Benson leaned on the mantel-shelf, a frown on his bronzed open face. 'She has never taken the least notice of the lines I sent, though I am sure they were pointed enough. She never seems to see; and for the life of me, I daren't "put it to the touch, and gain or lose it all." Three months' more leave, with a possible extension of three more. It's not a great deal of time. Still, it is a point gained to get the entrée of the house. "Lose it all!" Never! I'd wait three months, three years, or thirty, sooner than that should happen.'

And Captain Benson leaned his head on his hand, and gazed meditatively into the fire.

The eventful evening arrived. The three intervening days had been spent by Phyllis in various ways, and in more than one attempt to recover her lost letter. Several times she had taken the opportunity of her father being engaged elsewhere to prowls round the study. She had investigated the paper basket, peeped

into many neat little elastic-banded heaps of notes; but without result. The letter had mysteriously disappeared. Of one thing, however, Phyllis felt certain. Wherever it might be, her father's eyes had never rested on it; and in that thought she took comfort.

Never before had she seen her father so interested. The pile of manuscript notes he unearthed would have occupied many evenings only to glance through.

'Any one would suppose papa expected Captain Benson to stay three weeks instead of three hours. I am afraid when they meet, papa will be a good deal disappointed. I can't imagine his taking a *real* interest in such fustiness!'

Arrayed in a white dress of some soft clinging material, which appeared to have been gracefully draped on to her slight supple figure, Phyllis descended the wide oak staircase, her candle held high aloft. She glanced back at a tall 'coffin clock' that stood in a nook of the staircase.

'Dear me! I am dreadfully late! It is on the stroke of seven!' And she hastily blew out her candle, and setting it on the hall table, turned to the drawing-room.

'Oh! how you startled me! I had no idea you were here!' And Phyllis, blushing, held out her hand to a tall figure, which at that moment was emerging from the drawing-room door.

'I must apologise, both for startling you and for being before my time.' Captain Benson held aside the *portière* for Phyllis, as they passed into the drawing-room. 'Kitty had an engagement to dine with the M'Kenzies, and dropped me here *en route*.'

At that moment Mr Marsden appeared, with a cordial welcome. If he was in any way surprised by the early arrival of his guest, he was far too well bred to show it; and the interval before dinner passed easily and cheerily.

During the meal, Mr Marsden spoke little, and the ball of conversation was kept rolling by Phyllis and their guest. Many reminiscences of the pleasant weeks spent in the summer were reproduced and laughed over; and Phyllis felt quite regretful when, dessert ended, she had no alternative but to leave Captain Benson and her father to entertain each other.

'He really is nicer than any one else!' mused Phyllis, as she sat on a stool and leaned her head against the side of the chimney-piece. 'I think papa *must* like him, even if he is disappointed in his cleverness.'

'No, thanks! I don't care to smoke. I would far rather set to work at once;' and Phyllis heard the study door close on her father and his guest.

Half an hour later, the study bell rang.

'Papa is going to have coffee in the study. I suppose I had better go there.'

She rose. The study door stood open. Robins had just entered with a tray. Phyllis stood on the threshold, transfixed with astonishment. On the cleared table was spread an enormous map; Captain Benson was leaning over it in an excited manner, tracing out a route with his forefinger; while Mr Marsden—Phyllis could hardly credit her eyes!—was leaning over him, one hand placed on the shoulder of the younger man, and a delighted, interested expression on his face. Phyllis had never seen there before.

'Just as if they had known each other all their lives! I am certainly not wanted there!'

Phyllis retraced her steps, saying as she did so: 'You can bring me some coffee in the drawing-room, Robins.'

Nine o'clock, ten struck; and still the two men sat on, eagerly discussing the literature, manners, and customs of the country each was so interested in. Anecdote succeeded anecdote, adventure followed adventure; till at last Captain Benson, taking out his watch, said: 'It is almost too late now to settle to steady work; isn't it, sir? But you will let me come again—won't you?—and go through these poems with you. I can come round any evening that suits you.'

'Come as often as you can,' answered his host cordially. 'You have made me feel ten years younger.—But stop a minute! I had quite forgotten one thing.' A curious look of perplexity overspread Mr Marsden's face. He stopped short, and looked at his guest with an almost piteous expression in his eyes. Then, taking out a bunch of keys, he opened a drawer in his writing-table and took out a paper.

Captain Benson watched him curiously.

'I had quite forgotten in the pleasure you have given me that I had another reason for wishing to see you to-night. It is better I should be quite honest with you.' He looked steadily at his guest. 'Captain Benson, I don't like that!' So saying, he placed the open letter in his hand.

If a thunderbolt had fallen, Captain Benson could not have felt more astounded than when he recognised in the paper in his hand his own letter to Phyllis. His bronzed face flushed crimson; but his blue eyes met Mr Marsden's fearlessly.

'I presume Miss Marsden gave you these verses?' He looked inquiringly at his host.

'No. She does not know I have seen them. They came into my possession by accident, among some papers she was copying for me, and—' answering a look in the other's eyes—'I had seen them before I realised they were of a private nature. The letter was folded as you see it now; I could hardly flatter myself the verses were addressed to me.' Mr Marsden smiled grimly. 'When I turned the sheet, I saw they were addressed to my daughter.' He paused, as if expecting Captain Benson to offer some explanation; but none being forthcoming, he went on.

'You have interested me greatly; but if you continue to come to my house, it must be distinctly understood that there is to be no more of this sort of thing.'

'What is your objection to me?' inquired Captain Benson.

'Objection! I don't think I object to you. On the contrary, I like you much.'

'Then I don't understand the difficulty.'

'My daughter is very young; and—and—we know so little of you!' faltered Mr Marsden.

'Time will remedy the first of your objections; so we can put that aside,' replied Captain Benson. 'For the second, I cannot agree with you. Miss Marsden and I were staying, as you doubtless remember, for six weeks in the same house; so our acquaintance can scarcely be called superficial. It is true I have not had the pleasure of knowing you before this evening. But that is through

no fault of mine; for I repeatedly asked Miss Marsden to allow me to call on you when I returned to town, and she invariably told me it would be useless, as you never saw any one.' He glanced inquiringly at Mr Marsden.

'It is quite true. I have been very wrong,' Mr Marsden replied, humbly.

Captain Benson was touched as he looked at the bent figure and the grieved expression with which his host made this confession. He moved his chair nearer. 'Let us talk this over,' he said, leaning forward. 'You say you have no objection to me personally. That is well. I hold a good appointment. I have ample means. I have youth, and excellent health; and, last though not least, I love your daughter.' Captain Benson coloured as he added this last recommendation.

'I did not know it had gone so far,' murmured Mr Marsden helplessly.

'It has gone so far that I cannot possibly withdraw, as you suggest, with honour. I have done everything in my power to make your daughter like me, and to show my love for her, short of actually asking her to be my wife; and I should have done that before we left Dunveith, but that she seemed so unconscious, and I feared to startle her by being too abrupt.—Of course,' he continued, finding Mr Marsden did not speak, 'if you, knowing all this, forbid me your house, I shall have no alternative but to respect your wish. In a few months I return to Persia for three years. At the end of that time, Miss Marsden will be of age; and I warn you I shall then leave no stone unturned to win her for my wife.'

'And I shall have all this to go through again, I suppose, and very likely Phyllis will be unhappy in the meantime!' sighed Mr Marsden. 'And to think of this going on and my never knowing it. I thought Phyllis quite a child.'

Captain Benson smiled. 'I fear you would miss her terribly if you gave her to me.—But why not come out yourself to Persia, and revisit some of your old haunts?—Come, Mr Marsden: you will not now forbid me the house. Let me come to-morrow, and!—'

'And read the love-poems,' put in Mr Marsden. 'Well, perhaps it will be the shortest way out of my difficulties. I expect Phyllis has gone to bed.—No; the light is in the drawing-room. You can bid her good-night.'

Reader, shall we leave them? Nay, let us rather exercise our privilege, and for an instant draw aside the curtain of the future.

On the deck of a Peninsular and Oriental steamer lying off Gravesend all is bustle and confusion; for in a few minutes the bell will ring, the tender will put off, and the last of the passengers will be on board. On deck, those on board are waving a last adieu to their friends on the tender. One group only interests us. Standing apart is Phyllis—the same bright, merry Phyllis—but with a new love-light in her eyes; and bending over her a tall, handsome soldier, also an old acquaintance. But who is this?—the last person to leave the tender. Surely not—but, yes; it is Mr Marsden, alert and active, with binocular slung across his shoulders. Six months of the bracing presence of his son-in-law had acted as a marvellous tonic; and he is now proceeding to Persia, he would say for six

months, and Phyllis and her husband humour him.

The last whistle! the last adieu and waving of hands! The great steamer is under way. Let us wish them God-speed!

PIRACY IN FAR EASTERN SEAS.

PROBABLY every school-boy who was ever worth his salt, at some early period in his teens has sighed because the decadence of piracy as a regular profession necessitated his selecting some more prosaic career in life. Without in any way wishing to encourage his youthful aspirations to emulate Blackbeard or Captain Kidd, or the other worthies of the Spanish Main; and, on the other hand, without desiring to arouse the fears of those of his elders who contemplate running over to Calais, or up to Scarborough, or even across the Atlantic, it may be very truthfully pointed out that piracy is still more or less regularly pursued as a business by thousands of people in various parts of the world. Execution Dock is no longer decorated with dangling gibbets, it is true, and the successor of Tangier's terrible Dey now relies on voluntary visitors for part of his revenue; but the *loup de mer* still infests many a sea, and nowhere does the genus flourish as it does in far Eastern waters.

The Peninsular and Oriental, the Messageries Maritimes, and other China-bound great lines, all expressly stipulate in their charters and bills of lading and agreements with passengers, that they shall not be held responsible for loss caused by 'fire, pillage, or piracy.' Piracy, forsooth, on a five-thousand-ton vessel, speeding at eighteen or twenty knots an hour, along familiar courses, through waters policed by the navies of a score of civilised nations! Yet the condition is not superfluous, even in these end-of-the-century days. For instance, a very serious case of piracy occurred near Hong-kong, on the steamer 'Namoa,' in November 1890, when a crowd of Chinese passengers shot the captain and another European dead, wounded several officers, and looted the vessel, escaping in junks, which sailed up when the victorious signal was hoisted. But although the engine had been disabled, the boilers emptied, and the side-lights thrown overboard, the engineers got the vessel headed for Hong-kong before dawn. The writer had the felicity, a few months later, of seeing a number of the piratical gang made a head shorter. The scene—with its background of rugged hills, the gunboats in the middle-distance, and an evil-smelling beach lined with nineteen dispirited, haggard, unkempt wretches, waiting till the mandarin gave the signal to begin—which signal was delayed until half-a-dozen amateur photographers had obtained a satisfactory focus—the scene, I repeat, was one which will take long to efface from the memory. One of the condemned wretches, in particular, made an unpleasant impression. He was alleged to be the leader of the attack on the 'Namoa'; and as he

was brought to the village Aceldama trussed like a fowl and squatting on a basket, he raved vain-gloriously about his crimes in pigeon-English and Chinese alternately. 'I shall come back in eighteen months and haunt you all,' he threatened. The allotted time is now long past; but Mak Aloï has not yet revisited the pale glimpses of the moon.

China is peculiarly the pirate's happy hunting-ground, and nowhere does he flourish more, strange to say, than in the neighbourhood of the most civilised centres in the south, such as Canton, Amoy, and Foochow; and this, too, notwithstanding the existence of a fleet of small but swift gunboats specially detailed to patrol the rivers, in order to suppress freebooters and smugglers. Comparatively the other day, a steam-launch belonging to a resident at Canton—an English ex-naval officer—was seized by a dozen of these desperadoes under the very nose of the authorities, in broad daylight, and used for a while in pillaging some of the myriad craft which navigate the West River, being ultimately left derelict. Even in Hong-kong, within sight of Government House, these water-wolves have established a regular colony. They refer to their excursions euphemistically as 'going East,' and many an instance of their boldness and cruelty could be given if space permitted.

Although the Japanese are to a great extent a maritime people, and by no means wanting in courage, they are rarely found resorting to this method of livelihood. But on the other side of the Chinese Sea, along the Cochin-China coast, every other native follows it. Although British gunboats have destroyed hundreds of their junks, burnt scores of villages, and hanged a host of men, sailing into Hong-kong harbour time after time with a pirate dangling from every yard-arm, within the memory of comparatively young men—notwithstanding this, and the intermittent efforts at repression made by both the Chinese and French Governments, the shores of Tonquin and Annam are still a terror to navigators, owing to the hordes of well-armed and desperate natives whose canoes are hiding in every creek. Safe in their shoal-girt fastnesses, aided by spies, they swoop down on rich cargoes, or kidnap well-to-do merchants with an audacity that is incredible.

Coming nearer home, we find piracy still very far from a myth. The corsairs of the Malay Peninsula long ago gained a bad eminence; what novel is complete without its chapter on the becalmed brig, assailed by a fleet of praus in the Straits of Malacca or Sunda, massacring the crew previous to carrying off the hero and heroine into a gilded captivity? It is not in romance alone that the Malay pirate exists. One of the best-known figures in Singapore to-day is that of a Chinaman whose arms have been cut off above the elbow, and who lives on the charity of a few residents. A few years ago, the 'Hong-kong,' or cargo-boat of whose crew he was a member, was

attacked just outside Singapore harbour. He and his mates jumped overboard; and when he tried to save himself from drowning by clutching the rudder, the merciless marauders severed his arms with a couple of blows. Fortunately for him, an English pilot was cruising about not very far away in a launch, and steamed up on observing the disturbance. After picking up the men who were in the water, he arrested the six Malay pirates; and a few weeks later they were satisfactorily hanged, the armless Chinaman being provided with a special seat among the spectators in front of the gallows!

It is hardly within the province of an article on piracy to refer to the seizures of vessels in harbour, such as that of the 'Hok Canton' at Acheen in 1885; but whilst in these equatorial latitudes, mention must be made of a British pirate, once the terror of navigators in Eastern seas, who died in 1886 or 1887, at a ripe old age. He had been a man of herculean frame, though old, poor, and racked by rheumatism, when the writer knew him. One of the Scottish Stuarts, he must have taken to evil ways early in life, for tradition attributes to him exploits over half a century ago to which only the pen of Robert Louis Stevenson could really do justice. But no one knows the details. He was not unnaturally reticent on these matters; and it was only by calculating on his violent temper, and 'drawing' him by artfully worded references to some alleged outrage, that anything could be got out of him. Often have I heard him cry querulously, 'I never hanged a woman in Siam!'—and then he would launch out into a narrative of what he had done—how he had been a captive of the Cochin-China authorities, carried about naked in a bamboo cage for nine months; how he had been twice sentenced in Singapore to imprisonment for life, and released through the influence of his brother, an officer high in the East India Company's service, and—this with a boastful air, at which, nevertheless, one scarcely cared to smile—he had never been anything but a pirate!

Only quite recently a paragraph went the round of the papers, announcing a terrible tale of piracy. It was reported from Penang, that the Dutch vessel *Rajali Kongsee Atjeek* had been taken possession of between Penang and Acheen in July of this year by her Acheenese passengers, who murdered the captain (an Englishman), two English mates, and twenty-two members of the crew. The chief mate was a native of Aberdeen. The cargo was left intact by the pirates, whose leader was the Acheenese supercargo. Seven of his accomplices went aboard at one of the ports of call after the Customs officers had examined and left the steamer. This irregularity probably led to the disaster, which resulted in the pirates securing five thousand guilders as booty. Obtaining this, however, they also killed twenty-four passengers and wounded twelve, while eighteen others who escaped in a boat were drowned by the craft capsizing owing to overcrowding. Nineteen passengers and thirty-two of the crew were unarmed. The man at the wheel was first cut down with a sword,

then the chief mate was killed, and next the captain was slain in his cabin, these murders being followed by a general slaughter in the saloon.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE most important scientific event of the past month has been the meeting of the British Association at Nottingham, which, while it has not brought forward any great discovery or invention of a sensational character, has been full of interest to those desirous of keeping themselves posted with regard to scientific progress. Full reports of the addresses to the various sections appear in the *Times* and many other papers, and a perusal of these will give the reader a fair idea of the work of some of our best men. Some of these addresses are of a highly technical character, while others trench upon matters of more popular interest. The next meeting of the British Association will take place at Oxford, when the Marquis of Salisbury—whose scientific attainments are well known—will take the presidential chair.

Among the more popular items brought before the meeting at Nottingham was the address in the Mechanical Science Section, in which the subject of locomotion on land introduced the cycle. Of this modern vehicle the speaker, Mr J. Head, spoke in the highest terms, and said that by it the most wonderful increase to the locomotive power of man on land was obtained. One mile had been cycled at 27·1 miles per hour; 50 at 20, 100 at 16·6, 388 at 12·5, and 900 miles at the rate of 12·43 per hour. Comparing these speeds with the speed and endurance of horses, Mr Head referred to the recent race between German and Austrian cavalry officers, which gave rise to so much comment in the press. The winner performed the distance, about 388 miles, in 71·33 hours, equal to 5·45 miles per hour, and his horse has since died. Mr L. Fletcher cycled from Land's End to John o' Groat's house, 900 miles, in 72·4 hours, equal to 12·43 miles per hour, or more than double the distance that the winner of the cavalry race rode, and at above double the speed. Here is indeed a triumph for the cyclist, who has the farther advantage of reflecting that in a long-distance ride he is guilty of no cruelty to an uncomplaining beast.

At the Congress of Journalists recently held in London, many most interesting papers were read, and among these was one of especial interest, by Mr W. L. Thomas of the *Graphic*, who took for his subject illustrated journalism. After tracing the history of this phase of journalism, the reader of the paper, who has been associated all his life with writers and artists, and is therefore in a position to speak with some authority, prophesied that in the future 'the increased power of faithfully recording pictures of current events, will be by the aid of increased discoveries in photography and electricity.' This prophecy is based upon the instrument recently invented by Professor Elisha Gray, called the *Telautograph*, specimens of the

work of which were exhibited before the audience. The telautograph faithfully reproduces at one end of an electrical circuit a line drawn at the other end—save that the reproduced lines are slightly thickened in the process.

Before jumping to any hasty conclusion as to the value and probable utility of an invention like the telautograph, it is as well to look back into the past in order to see what has been done by others in the same direction, and in such a case reference to old textbooks is invaluable. Thus we learn that half a century ago Bakewell's telegraph was able to transmit a drawing executed in the first instance on tinfoil by a varnish-like ink. Later on this form of instrument was much improved upon, and later still Cowper's *writing* telegraph made it possible for a man to transmit his autograph—under certain limitations—by electric wire. So that the advance in the instrument now introduced by Professor Gray is not so great as it would seem at first sight to be. What is really wanted is the means of doing for the eye what the telephone and phonograph have accomplished for the ear. Such an instrument does not seem outside the range of possibility, but it will need a genius to work it out.

One of the greatest and most important monopolies ever created by the patent laws of Britain expires this year. The period of fourteen years for which the holders of the incandescent electric lamp patents were, very rightly, protected comes to an end, and the manufacture of the glow lamps which are now in use in so many thousands of buildings is thrown open to the world. The profit on the manufacture has hitherto been enormous, a lamp costing only ninepence retailing at from three shillings and sixpence to four shillings. Aladdin's lamp itself could hardly bring more profit to its owner than has this little glass bulb inclosing a carbon filament. The price will now come down, for competition is not only threatened from home manufactories which are ready for immediate work, but from Germany and America. But the consumer will do well to guard against the purchase of too cheap a lamp. It will clearly be more worth his while to pay say a florin for a lamp with a life of seven hundred hours, than to purchase two for the same amount, having a combined life of five hundred hours. The present manufacturers will yet be able to kill competition if they reduce the price to a reasonable figure, and will at the same time guarantee a lamp of the old efficient kind.

Messrs Fletcher, Russell, & Co., of Warrington, have introduced a new method of colouring iron-work, which, it is said, entirely prevents rust, even though the metal be brought to a red heat. Indeed, they are treating the gas stoves of their manufacture with the compound. The preparation can be made to assume any desired colour, either dull or polished, and all tints are said to be quite unchangeable. The value of such an invention cannot be overestimated, and it is one which will be welcomed by the decorative designer as well as by the engineer.

Many persons find a difficulty, when looking through a microscope, in keeping the unoccupied eye closed, or if they keep it open, in ignoring the image which it receives of external objects. Dr L. B. Hall of Philadelphia has invented an attachment to the microscope eyepiece which obviates

this difficulty. It consists of a vulcanite shield which can be brought over the eye not in use, so as to darken it for the time being. Skilled microscopists by practice attain the power of keeping both eyes open while at their work, and at the same time concentrating their attention upon the image received by one only. A little practice enables one to do this with the telescope also, and the muscular strain of keeping one eye closed is thus got rid of with great comfort to the observer.

The Corinth Canal is now open to the passage of ships. The work of construction was begun as long ago as April 1882, but it has been interrupted for financial reasons more than once—and the rock through which the channel is cut offered difficulties both in its hardness and height. The canal, for the most part, represents a waterway with a perpendicular wall of rock on either side. It is not quite four miles long, and has an average breadth of one hundred feet. Steamships bound for Constantinople from the Adriatic will save eighteen hours by traversing the Corinth Canal, and Marseilles steamers will in like manner save eight hours.

Any busy man who has experienced the annoyance of waiting at a telephone while the wire he wants is occupied, as he learns through the exchange, by another person, will be inclined to welcome the introduction of an instrument called the Telephonometer. This instrument will register the time of each conversation at the telephone, from the ringing up of the exchange to the conclusion of the conversation. Talking would thus be charged for, like gas, by meter, and garrulous beings would have the wholesome check of expense before them. The Telephonometer has its origin in the German telephone department, where for the future it will control the duration of telephonic conversations, and determine their cost.

It is estimated that in London alone twenty-five thousand horses are employed in the carrying trade, and that their value is a million and a quarter sterling, or fifty pounds per horse. Their food costs eight hundred thousand pounds per annum, and is calculated in rather a curious way, the amount of forage consumed by each animal being based upon its height. The rule is that a horse should cost to feed as many shillings per week as he stands hands high.

It is probable that in the near future horse traction in our streets will be superseded to a great extent by electricity. An omnibus driven by storage cells has frequently been seen of late successfully steering its way through the heavy traffic of some of the principal London thoroughfares. A company at Chicago have placed upon the market an electric carriage which is constructed to carry four persons at the rate of seven miles an hour, and another form of electrically driven vehicle has been introduced in Italy. In each of these cases a small electric motor is employed which receives energy from battery cells carried on the vehicle.

A new system by which smokeless combustion of coal is rendered possible, has been adopted by the North German Lloyd and the Hamburg-American Packet Companies as the result of some successful trials at Berlin. The system is briefly as follows: The coal is in the first place reduced

to powder in centrifugal disintegrators, and is then conveyed by a jet of steam or compressed air into pear-shaped combustion chambers lined with fire-brick. This combustion chamber takes the place of an ordinary furnace, and the coal dust brought within it by the steam or air jet is dispersed over the whole extent of the chamber and becomes at once ignited. Moreover, as each particle of coal is separated from its neighbour and held in suspension, the oxygen necessary for complete combustion attacks it on all sides, and no wasteful smoke escapes. After the initial combustion of the dust, the air or steam jet can be reduced and regulated according to the amount of dust necessary to produce the required quantity of steam. If air be used, it can previously be heated by waste gases, and thus present an element of economy.

The recent coal strike will have the effect of calling renewed attention to the use of liquid fuels, and this will be particularly the case with our railways, which are put to enormous expense and inconvenience when any stoppage of the coal supply occurs. The Great Eastern Railway are already fitting up twenty-five locomotives with Holden's liquid fuel apparatus, which will burn almost any kind of crude oil or tar. At present these liquid fuels can be had in any quantities at a cheap rate, and it behoves all users of steam power to turn their attention in that direction for the probable solution of the fuel difficulty.

That unsavoury subject, the disposal of the Metropolitan Sewage, has occupied the attention of many thinkers during the last few decades, and we are glad to see that the last remedy adopted has been to a great extent successful in clearing what once was called the silver Thames of its pollutions. During the past twelve months the plan adopted has been to carry the sludge—or solid matter deposited by the sewers—far out to sea in specially constructed tank steamers, and there to discharge it—instead of allowing it as heretofore to putrefy in the river and upon its banks. As an unmistakable testimony to the increased purity of the Thames owing to this innovation, fish are once more ascending the stream. Whitebait, shrimps, and small crabs have come up the river as far as Gravesend and Erith, and according to Dr Günther salmon and sea-trout in the grilse state make their appearance at the mouth of the river, 'ready to ascend and restock the stream as soon as its poisoned waters shall be sufficiently purified to allow them a passage.'

Many serious and even fatal accidents have occurred from the passage of atmospheric electricity along telephone wires during a storm. Recently at Metz, during the progress of some target practice by a regiment of field artillery, a soldier who approached a telephone receiver at the moment that the conducting wire was struck by lightning, was killed, while a companion was paralysed by the shock. It has long been believed that if persons struck by lightning were treated by the artificial respiration system adopted in the case of the drowned, life might often be saved, but this treatment does not seem to have been tried in the case mentioned.

An Indian paper advocates the use of a coloured material for hats as a protection against

sunstroke, and a correspondent writes to say that he has had all the linings of his hats and coats made of yellow material for the past five years. To this simple precaution he attributes his immunity during that period from fever and sunstroke—often under circumstances of extreme exposure. Previous to the adoption of these yellow protectors, he was a victim to both forms of disease.

The Mammoth Cave of Kentucky is remarkable for the extreme purity of its air, and the curious physiological effect of breathing it for a period of twelve hours has been recently described by Dr Hovey, the geologist. He found that his perception of smell was increased to such an extent, that after emerging from the cave every tree, person, and common object seemed to be endowed with a distinct odour. This recognition of smells previously unrecognisable caused violent nausea, which lasted for about half an hour and then subsided. The effects are attributed to the extremely pure air of the cave, as well as to the absence for so many hours of anything to stimulate the olfactory sense. In other words the nose, being at absolute rest for so long a time, became extremely sensitive to odours which ordinarily make no impression whatever.

A correspondent of the *Lancet* points out that when sugar is partly burnt in a gas flame it is destructive to mice. He lately baited a trap with burnt sugar, and in the morning found within it a mouse quite dead, and another one lying outside the trap also dead, the sugar having disappeared. This is somewhat disquieting, for burnt sugar, or caramel, is used as an ingredient of many articles of food. May it not be possible that the gas flame may have conferred upon it poisonous properties?

DANNEL THE CARTER.

THE stable is quite dark and silent; the five great cart-horses stand motionless; only the mice are lively as they scuttle across the loft above, making a horse prick occasionally a drowsy ear. By-and-by streaks of red light begin to steal under the door, where the patient feet of the horses, passing in and out year's end to year's end, have worn the stones down. Gradually the shadowy forms of the horses grow out of the darkness; as the light gets stronger, they stir, and there is an air of expectancy about them; then all the ears prick up, and all the heads turn towards the door as a footstep is heard coming through the yard—a brisk, trotting footstep. The horses greet it with low, snuffling whinnies. The next moment the top of the door is thrown back, letting in a flood of light, and a man walks in. He is a little old man, clad in a white linen jacket and corduroys. His first act is to go up to each horse in turn and pat each head and firm strong shoulder; then he goes and leans his arms on the half-door and looks out for a moment or two. His withered face is so brown and wrinkled that it is like a walnut shell; he has a pinched nose, a pursed-up mouth, and small bright dark eyes. His whole expression is keen, honest, and obstinate.

There has been rain in the night, and the thick moss on the barn-roof is vividly green. Long

bright drops drip from the thatch; on the top of the cowhouse, a flock of sparrows are chattering and quarrelling; a long line of ducks march through the rickyard, stopping occasionally to paddle about in a puddle or dive their bills into a pea or bean rick. The old purple-breasted drake leads the way; his bright green glistening head is as brilliant as the wet moss on the barn-roof. They waddle off down the quiet road to the pond. How cool and greenly translucent the pond looks in the early morning light! The nut-boughs hang over it, and once in a while a nut slips its tawny husk and drops with a gentle splash into the water; or a yellow leaf floats down, and settles so softly as to cause scarce a ripple. There is a dragon-fly skimming across it, with a rustle and flash of glittering colours, a wonderful gleam of copper and purple, of emerald and turquoise. At sight of the cool green water, the ducks all rush forward, flapping their wings; then pause, when they have waded half in, to drink as greedily as though they had not stopped at every puddle on the way! There is no more still reflection for the little pond; the ducks splash and dive from one end to the other, till Daniel—or Dannel, as he is always called—the carter comes down with the horses and sends them quacking away. The horses hurry forward—Diamond, the old black mare, going in till the water laps against her deep strong chest. For a minute or two they stand drinking, drinking a long fill; then they slowly and reluctantly get out of the pond again. Doctor, the great brown, by virtue of his age and sobriety, is allowed to go without a halter. How he revels in this little bit of freedom! Stopping to eat a bit of the emerald grass growing along the gutter that flows from the pond, pulling a mouthful out of the hedge, going to look over a gate, and then coming along with a leisurely and independent gait, paying no attention to Dannel's shouts of, 'Hoot! Doctor!' as he stands holding the yard-gate open. The farmyard is all awake now; the cows are being driven into the milking-house, with a great deal of barking and excitement on the part of the rough old sheep-dog. A man is leaning against the stable wall, talking to the cowboy; he is a new-comer, just engaged as 'carter's mate.'

'What sort of a old chap be he?' he inquired as Dannel came in at the gate.

'Oh! he be middling enough, but a bit queerish; he can't abide the women!'

'Why's that?'

'Ah! he'll tell you that himself, sure enough; he be ter'ble fond of talking of it!' answered the boy, moving off, to allow the horses to enter the stable.

'Good-mornin', mate,' said Dannel civilly. 'If you'll come along o' me, I'll show you which be the horses.—This be Punch,' pointing to the roan at the beginning of the stable; 'and that next he be Poppet, and Violet, and Black Diamond; and this here be Doctor. I'll warrant he be a good hoss, that he be,' said Dannel, passing his hand proudly over Doctor's shining flank. 'Treat un kind and he'll do anything fur you; but if you offers to hit un, he'll go through hedge wif you! That be all; and I'll be bothered if you could see a purtier lot anywheres! And now, I 'lows we'd better begin feedin' on 'em.'

There was a rope-ladder in one corner, leading

to the loft above, which Dannel ascended; and a moment or two after, a quantity of clover came tumbling into the rack above the horses' heads. When they had finished eating, the two men began to harness them. As they went out of the yard, Dannel glanced round and said: 'You be holdin' your whip wrong; you must hold un as I holds mine!'

Jim shifted his whip with a half-smile, and they went on in silence till the field was reached. The sky was stormy; huge masses of cloud hung heavily, casting great purple shadows on the hills; the blue showed here and there between the clouds, and the sun shone fitfully. At this time of year everything has a softened look; most of the pale stubble-fields are yet unploughed; the trees are toned down with buff and brown tints; there is a haziness over the distance; and the hedges are gray with wild clematis; while a white dew lies over the grass. The flowers are gone, save where a dandelion still lingers, or a campion a little deeper pink than its sister-flower of the summer, or the tiny weed-flowers that creep about the fallows.

The two men harnessed the horses to the harrows and began to lead them up and down the field; another man and a boy joined them, and collecting the couch into heaps, set fire to it. A flock of sea-gulls came flying inland with a whiteness on their wings as of beaten silver.

'I'll warrant we be goin' to hae stormy weather, you,' said Dannel with a wave of his whip at them. 'When you sees they plaguy gulls a-comin' in, you may be sure 'tis goin' to be rough.'

'Ah! And I seed the old sow a-carryin' about straw to make her a bed,' said Jim.

'There be a many ways o' tellin' what the weather be goin' to be,' said Dannel; 'but what you can goo by more nor anything, be they little red bird's-eye flowers; they shuts up so tight when rain be a-comin', I've often a said to my mate: "It be goin' to rain; they bird's-eyes a-shutting up;" and sure enough there'd be rain afore long; and then, when it be over, they'll open again, and look so innocent!'

'The moon looked queer last night; I thot we war goin' to hae a change,' said Jim; 'he was late last night.'

'Ah! he be allus three-quarter o' an hour later every night till he comes to the full.'

'Aw! I didn't know that; I thot he warn't particular whether he gained or lost, till he come to the full.'

'Yes; three-quarter; you ask anybody, he'll tell you that.'

There being no wind to blow the smoke from the couch-fire away, it hung white over the field. It was very still; the only sounds besides the rattling of the harrows were the voices of some children blackberrying in the distance, and tinkling of a sheep-bell from some sheep turned out in the fallow.

'Tis time we knocked off and had our dew-bit,' said Dannel at last, leading the horses off to the hedge; where the two men sat down and brought out their breakfasts, while the horses munched contentedly away at the hedge.

'Hev you bin here long?' inquired Jim presently.

'Forty-five years, man and boy. I come here

cowboy; then milkman; then carter's mate; then carter, same as I be now.'

'How come you to turn carter, if you began milkman?'

'There was an 'oman in that,' growled Dannel. 'Drat 'em, they be in everything!'

'What she got to do wi' it?'

'Why, 'twas like this yere,' said Dannel, settling himself as though for a long tale. 'There was me and a dairymaid—the finest-lookin' maid ever I set eyes upon! I can see her now as plain as I can you'—a half-wistful expression came over the old man's face—'wi' her eyes as black as kickseys [sloes], and her cheeks like car-nations; but her heart was as hard as a Isle o' Wight cheese—that it were! And I was a gurt chap, halfways betwixt eighteen and nineteen. Half-past five I got up and got the cows in. There was six for she to milk, and six for me; but she'd be off every mornin' a-courtin' her spark—so I heerd arterwards—and left me to do 'em all! I thought I was keepin' company wi' she all the time, you sees! Lor, lor, lor! what a foolish errant she did send me on! He was carter's mate here, same as you be now; and one fine day off they went and got married! Dear, dear, how the folks did laugh. I felt like a snail wi'out are a shell. But wold maister, he said they hadn't a treated me well sarvin' me so; and he didn't think much of him best o' times; so he gived 'em both the sack, and put me on in his place, fur I wouldn't hae nothin' more to do wi' milkin'; I was that soured, I'd hae turned the milk!'

'Be that why you be a single man?' inquired Jim.

'Yes, 'tis. If a hoss kicks me once, I'll warrant I don't go anearst his heels again in a hurry!'

Jim took a long pull at his tin bottle of tea, and said: 'Coz one 'oman med a fool o' you, weren't no call to think all on 'em would. Now, there be my missis; I don't know what I should do without she!'

'All I've a got to say be that there baint no trust to be put in 'em,' said Dannel doggedly. 'They be like a shyin' hoss—you never be sure on 'em. They've a hand in all the trouble as ever comes into the world.—Ah! I often thinks o' that young hussy Eve, when I be out in the fields a-harvestin' and a hay-makin' wi' the sun pourin' down fitten to melt you! 'Twas all along o' she as we've got to arn our bread by the sweat o' our brows!'

The sun came out as the day wore on, shining on the mellow tints of the hedge, where the maples had turned yellow, and the bracken russet. Sometimes a cart would pass along the road, and its driver shout a remark to Dannel, who would at once give Jim a long account of him, his family, past history, and place of abode.

When the other men went home to dinner, Dannel went up to the farmhouse, and presently reappeared with a large junk of bread, some cold pork, and potatoes. He sat down on a heap of straw in one corner of the stable and slowly consumed his dinner. The big black stable cat came purring round to share it. Dannel slept at the farmhouse, and was supposed to have his meals there; but he always preferred to take them away with him either into the fields or the

stable. When his dinner was finished, he lay back on the straw and had a peaceful nap till Jim came back again. As they were reharnessing the horses, there came a crowing, chuckling sound, and a little girl of about two years appeared. She stood laughing, and putting her small round head, which was covered with scant yellow hair like spun-silk, round the door as she peeped up at Dannel and called, 'Yannel! Yannel!'

The old man's face completely changed—it became positively illumined. 'Well, my dove, and what do you want?' he asked in the most blandishing tones his rough voice could take.—She toddled off towards Doctor.—'You wants a ride on Doctor, that's what you wants. Well, you must give wold Dannel a kiss fust!—She at once laid her soft cheek against his hard brown face.—'You be artful, you be,' he said beamingly. Then he lifted her on to Doctor's great back and held her there.

'Who be she?' asked Jim.

'Oh! the little un up at the farm,' replied Dannel.

At this moment a sharp-faced, bright-looking, elderly woman appeared hurriedly. 'There—I knew she'd be here,' said she. 'Directly my back be turned, that bad maid be off to stable!'

'And why shouldn't she, if she've a mind to it?' said Dannel in a surly voice. 'Where you'd allus be off to, if you'd your way, would be to shop, a-squanderin' your wage on finery, makin' yourself look like a old sheep in lamb's guise.' He looked at her with a chilly and distrustful expression as he spoke. Dannel always was oppressed by a fear that every unmarried woman who came near him wanted to marry him.

'Be you going to keep that child here all day?' inquired Sarah blandly.

'Run away now, my lovey,' said Dannel, dropping his voice to a softly amiable tone again. 'And to-morrow, I'll take you out in cart.'

The baby went off, holding Sarah's hand, but still turning to gaze back at Dannel.

'I never know'd nothin' so knowin' as that maid be,' said he, watching her admiringly. 'She took to me from the first, that she did! I'll warrant I could stop her cryin' when nobody else could, when she war a little tiny baby!'

'I wonders you'll hae anything to do wi' she, considering as she'll be an 'oman one o' these days,' said Jim with a twinkle.

'Ah! but my maid be goin' to be worth the whole lot o' 'em boiled down!' said Dannel with conviction, leading the horses out of the stable as he spoke.

'His maid' was the only person to whom he ever unbent; she was the only one he never snubbed or snapped at. She always rode in the cart when he went to cut fodder for the horses, returning on the top of a load of sweet-smelling clover; or in winter, when he went for turnips or straw, she sat in the front of the cart carefully wrapped up in his coat. On Sundays he hung about round the kitchen door till she came out, when he would take her 'a-flowerin'' when the summer grass had grown long and golden with buttercups; or a 'bird's-nest' in the spring, to see the horses when they were tethered out, or the cows milked. There was always something new and delightful.

Gray clouds were blowing up from the south

across a stormy yellow, when the last weeds were cleared off the harrows and put on the fire; there was a dull fiery red where the sun had just set, but opposite was a bit of clear pale blue sky with one quiet star. The reflection of the sunset sky cast a subdued light down one side of Dannel and the horses, as they went through the dark field beneath. In the distance, blowing up a great cloud of white smoke against the dark hills, was the couch-fire. Jim stayed to give it a final stir with his preng till it flashed up so red a flare that the paling glory of the sunset, the little white star, and everything round, seemed to go dark in a moment.

The stable was dark when they reached it.

'I must go up and get some candles fur my lantern,' said Dannel.

There was a pleasant smell of new-baked bread filling the kitchen as he entered it, for Sarah was just pulling the hot loaves out of the oven.

'There's your tea ready for you over there,' she said, pointing to the dresser; 'but you'd better stop and have it by the fire, for it's a bit chillish out this evening.'

'No, thank ye,' said Dannel suspiciously. 'I'll take it with me. What I be come for be some candles.'

Sarah reached up to the high mantel-piece for the candles, and in doing so, knocked off a candlestick and bent it. She picked it up and tried to straighten it.

'Here; give it to me,' said Dannel, taking it and putting it straight. 'Dear! how helpless the women be!'

'You're that conceited, Dannel, I've no patience with ye,' said Sarah, ruffled. 'I'll warrant there baint many things as you can do as I couldn't, if I tried.'

'Can ye sow?' asked Dannel with great contempt; 'or thatch, or mow, or plough?'

'I dessay I could if I tried to it,' replied Sarah undauntedly; 'and I've a sowed beans, and thatched our bee-hives; and I'll tell you what I've a done'—

'Your words, Sairey, comes out as fast as the chaff do when we be a-threshin', and wi' about as much sense in 'em as the chaff hae grain.'

'There's good grain comes out, too, Dannel, when you be threshin'.'

'If there be any grain in the women's talk, I'll warrant it be mowburnt, and nothin' ever comes o' it!'

'If no good comes o' our words, 'tis because the men's minds, Dannel, be but bare and stony ground for 'em to fall on!'

Dannel could think of no retort to this, so he went off, saying: 'Dear! dear! how the women do talk!'

'Don't forget to bring some candles for me, if you goes into town to-morrow,' called Sarah after him.

'Yes,' replied Dannel grumpily, and departed.

In spite of his dislike to 'the women,' Dannel never forgot any of the numerous commissions they gave him to do when he went into the market-town. He always put a series of knots in his great blue-spotted handkerchief; and when he got into the shop, he would draw it out and go through the different knots in an under-tone: 'This yere be the meat fur to-morrow's dinner; and this two reels of machinery cotton black;

and wicks fur the lamps; and a penny o' cough drops; and— Oh yes! this be it; this little titty tiny un at the end o' it!—Three pounds o' tea if—you—plaze!

On one occasion a rather eccentric aunt of the master's, staying at the farm, told him to go and order her a bonnet. 'And tell them, Dannel, it's to be a plain one!'

Dannel was just starting with a load of straw to the town. He looked rather sour, but said nothing. When he reached the millinery establishment, he drew the team up outside it. It was a snowy day, and he had his long great-coat on, faded, by years of exposure, to a dull greenish brown. It was powdered white over the shoulders with snow. In one hand he held his big brass-mounted whip. He opened the door and walked sturdily in. 'You be to make Miss Dixey a bonnet,' he said in his strong rough voice; 'and you mind this—you baint to put none o' they cockelorum jigs on to it!' Having said this, he walked out of the shop, waved his whip to the team, and went on with his load of straw. The bonnet arrived in due course, and proved satisfactory!

He was a strange, obstinate, crusty, old man, living a solitary life, out in the fields all day, always in company with the horses, till such an understanding grew up between him and them that they knew every wave of his hand or whip, every tone of his voice. He took a wonderful pride in them; and in the evenings, when the other men went home, he would stay in the stable grooming them and plaiting their manes and tails with straw and ribbons. In the winter, when the wind was blowing in freezingly under the door, and the long icicles hung from the thatch, sparkling in the frosty white light of the moon, and the horses' hair was all ruffed up with the cold, he would be driven up to the house, where he would sit over the brewhouse fire reading his Bible by the light of his lantern. He always read aloud in a loud monotonous chant, raising his voice still higher if 'the missis' or Sarah came in, and choosing such parts as he thought at all applicable, such as, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches;' 'and everywhere else, says I!'

But one evening the 'little maid,' playing round the kitchen table, fell on the hard stone floor and cut her hand. She began to wail and cry pitifully, and a moment after, Dannel's head was thrust round the kitchen door. 'What's the matter with Polly?' he asked with an angry glance at Sarah.

'You needn't look at me like that!' she said indignantly. 'I han't done nothing to her. She fell down.'

Polly held out a small chubby hand with a bleeding palm to him.

'Wait a moment, my little maid, and I'll soon cure that,' said he, hurrying off to the stable, and reappearing with a large cobweb, which he wrapped round the wounded hand. The novelty of this so pleased Polly, that she stopped crying, and began to laugh, though the tears were still trickling down her cheeks.

'Got any picture-book, Sarey?' asked Dannel, picking Polly up, and carrying her off to the chimney corner.

Sarah produced a battered volume from the

table drawer; and Dannel turned over the pages and explained the pictures, till Polly becoming sleepy, Sarah carried her off to bed.

After that, Dannel often came into the kitchen of an evening, and would sit in the chimney corner and tell Polly stories of the different horses he had had under his charge, and of his own experiences as a little boy 'minding' the rooks. He was always very civil to Sarah on her own ground, and on one occasion he even went so far as to pay her a compliment. She had just been cleaning the kitchen, and the floor was snow-white, save where it took rosy tints in front of the blazing fire. The dresser had been polished till it shone again; the coppers under it twinkled with brightness. Dannel cast an admiring glance back at it, as he was preparing to depart, and said: 'The kitchen looks proper, Sairey! I l'ows you knows how to get round the table!'

Sarah was silent with astonishment for some time after; then she said: 'Well, there! I declare Dannel be like a Ribstone apple, he improves with keeping!'

DESERTED.

Will you remember, when, at close of day,

The crimson sun in alien skies is burning,

The eyes that see his rising far away,

Eyes dim with their long watch for your returning?

Will you remember, when, at last, at last,

These weary eyes are closed in dreamless sleeping,

How they would brighten for you in the past

Ere their long night of watching and of weeping?

Will you, perchance, when many days are over,

Come back, with broken heart, to die alone,

Find the old places, but no friend, no lover,

No home where once you knew them all your own?

Ah, then you will remember, sad and old,

This heart which loved you, and which you have broken—

The heart which would have blessed you and consoled,
And all the tender words I would have spoken.

You will remember then, and, slowly burning,

Old memories shall eat into your heart,

Of all my passionate hope, my hopeless yearning,

Surely at last you too shall bear your part.

Oh, I could curse you—if I did not love you!

You, who have made my life a heaven, a hell.

I hate that passionless sun that shone above you,

Yet—for he looked on you—I love him well.

D. R.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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THE FIRST ORATORIO.

By J. F. ROWBOTHAM, Author of *The History of Music*.

A PERSON visiting the Crystal Palace on the occasion of a Handel Festival, and observing the four thousand singers crowding in multitudinous throngs the orchestra, the five hundred instrumentalists ranged in a portentous band beneath them, and finally the great organ, reared like some huge mystic superstructure behind—beholding all this array of voices and instruments, and then suddenly hearing them pour fourth a stentorian chorus from the 'Messiah' or 'Israel in Egypt,' which rolls in vast and endless volume through the enormous building—a visitor to this scene for the first time could not but be struck, nay, overwhelmed by the mightiness of the spectacle and the harmonious magnitude of the sound, which he saw and heard before him, and might well be tempted to ask, What sort of thing was the First Oratorio, from which this is so stupendous a development? From what quaint and forgotten source did this mighty river proceed, whose waves now beat before me?

The answer to such a question is one not only likely to interest every lover of music, but every cultivated mind. Oratorios have been and are so popular amongst us, that we naturally have the same interest in them as in any other product of man's creative genius, which attracts attention and compels admiration.

In the first place, we may well imagine that if we could have travelled back a century or more in fancy to the time of Handel himself, or a little later, we should have seen a very different spectacle on the platform. The crowds of tenors and basses now arrayed in faultless dress clothes or garbed in the more common morning attire of to-day, would be replaced by men in full-bottomed wigs, reeking with powder, in bright red or green coats and knee-breeches, and wearing swords by their sides. The ladies would have worn powdered hair, patches, and furbelows. Already we are in strange proximities, and the oratorio as

seen in the reign of George III. looks very different from what we are accustomed to behold in it to-day.

But if we were to go back further still, we should find the singers not content with sitting and standing as they sang or were silent; but instead thereof, settling appropriate actions to their words, and endeavouring to depict by their gestures, and even by their dress, the sufferings of some persecuted apostle, the passion of some saintly martyr, or whoever else were the hero of the sacred drama.

The oratorio as we see it and know it is a spectacle deprived of all its romance, a drama divested of its acting, a piece of musical eloquence bereaved of all the help which scenic display and appropriate dresses could afford the singers to portray the action which they are describing.

Like all developed things which are in the world around us, the oratorio has had a long history, and only by slow and laborious degrees has it attained its present pitch of perfection. If we would seek the source whence it came, we must turn back to the Mystery Plays of the middle ages. Out of this apparently so unpromising source the oratorio arose. Mystery plays used constantly to be provided with musical interludes and occasional songs, with which the characters relieved the monotony of their declamation. And this appendage of music to the sacred plays first suggested the possibility of applying it constantly to the development of the action.

The clergy finding people appreciate the stories out of the Bible, when they were enacted on the platforms of the mystery theatres, tried the experiment of introducing these performances into their churches. The first of the kind that we read of in medieval chronicles was the drama of the 'Ass,' which belongs to the twelfth century. It was played in church on the fourteenth of January every year. A beautiful girl was selected as the heroine of this strange drama, and she was seated on an ass, most elegantly caparisoned. She was intended to represent the Virgin Mary; and in order to make the resem-

blance the more complete, a young baby was placed in her arms, who was designed to represent the infant Jesus. In this guise she was led up the church, and dismounted at the altar, while the ass was tethered by her. The chancel, or part of it, was turned for the time being into the representation of a manger, and while the ceremony we have described was going on, the choir sang a long hymn or song descriptive of the ass and its mistress.

Not in one or two churches only, but in nearly every church in Europe was this strange little drama presented to the view of the congregation once a year; and in learning to admire and take an interest in this musical spectacle, our ancestors were learning their first lesson towards appreciating the oratorio.

From so simple a form as the above, the idea grew to more elaborate proportions. The story of the Conversion of St Paul—the very same subject which attracted the genius of Mendelssohn in the middle of this century—was sung with appropriate action at Rome four hundred years before. One singer represented the apostle, others enacted the parts of his companions. They moved along the church, when suddenly a flashing light was shown through the roof, and the singer fell down as if blind. The voice from the clouds was represented by a concealed choir, much in the manner wherein Mendelssohn elected to represent it. The journey to Ananias was then portrayed; and the whole was accompanied by strains of music, which were a mixture of snatches of the church service and of popular airs of the day—not a very promising combination for the prospects of future art.

The story of Abraham and Sarah was similarly represented at Florence a few years later; and this story seems to have been an especial favourite with the promoters of that sort of entertainments, since in the notices which chroniclers furnish us of these musical exhibitions, Abraham and Sarah occurs twice or thrice as often as any other religious drama.

But yet this was not oratorio proper, nor can the actual musical form be said to have begun until a considerably later period, when in a very singular way, and from an unexpected quarter, the first great impetus was given to the culmination of all these tendencies in a definite oratorio.

Among the great preachers of Rome, the most popular of his day was St Philip Neri. The eloquence of his sermons, the fervour of his religious zeal, the austerity of his life—all combined to increase his reputation for holiness and draw crowds to his church. Unlike many of the ecclesiastics of his day, he approved of all means of winning people to a religious life, and attracting them to church. He held that the end justifies the means; and among the most potent auxiliaries to the cause of proselytism was, he thought, good music. Accordingly, he introduced the

short sacred dramas we have spoken of as a regular adjunct to his services.

It was his custom to hold evening services in his church every day, for the purpose of giving the shopmen and labourers of Rome an opportunity of attending, which otherwise they would have been unable to do. The musical drama was divided into so many acts, and between each act the eloquent ecclesiastic preached a short sermon, commenting on that portion of the story which had just been represented, and explaining anything in it which seemed to require explanation. Great care was taken in rehearsing the dramas, and willing volunteers were found for the work, furnished with excellent voices, and sufficient skilled musicians to perform their parts with spirit and correctness.

So popular did these religious plays become, along with the services which accompanied them, that people flocked from all parts of Rome to hear them; and the good pastor had the pleasure of seeing many worldly people of fashion become 'very good Christians, by constantly attending the evening services and going through the form of prayers, until at last they became partakers of the spirit.'

Occasionally he varied the religious drama by substituting a number of hymns; but this was by no means such a popular method of proceeding. The people liked the scenery, the dresses, the action, the stage—for there was a stage in the chancel, on which the action of the drama proceeded—and declared that there was no church like St Philip Neri's for learning to understand the Scriptures, and reaping all the profit from them which they were capable of conceding. The church of St Philip Neri was called St Mary's in Vallicella, and the portion of the edifice where the plays were held was called the Oratory. From this reason the musical dramas began to be called 'the plays of the Oratory' or 'Oratorios'—a name which they have since retained.

For the purpose of furnishing a direct source of lineage to the modern oratorio, it was necessary, however, that the purely religious part of the service should be eliminated, and that only the musical and dramatic element should remain. This was not possible during St Philip Neri's life. His eloquence was so great and convincing that people would by no means hear of a divorce between the sermon and the drama. The two things remained in combination, and were found to be the most charming form of worship and amusement to be obtained in Rome.

But Neri died, and the performances were continued without any of his irresistible eloquence to recommend them to the public. What, then, was wanted was a more careful elaboration of the plot and a greater and fuller attention to the music. Emilio del Cavaliere, a famous musician of the day—it was in the year 1600—has the credit of applying these two desiderata to the musico-religious form of drama which St Philip Neri had introduced; and by this means

Emilio has gained the title of being 'the Father of the Oratorio.'

'The First Oratorio,' in the real and perfect sense of the word, was performed in St Philip Neri's Oratory shortly after the death of that celebrated preacher, and its joint-authors were a lady named Laura Guidicconi, who wrote the words, and Emilio del Cavaliere, who composed the music. It was entitled 'The Representation of the Soul and the Body,' and was in a great degree allegorical in its spirit. The characters, which were enacted by Roman youths, were Time, Life, Pleasure, the Intellect, the Soul, and the Body. The dresses for these strange *dramatis personæ* were devised on the same lines of fancy which we indulge at the present day, when a lady goes to a fancy dress ball as 'Night' or 'Winter,' and may be easily conjectured without our pausing to describe them.

In addition to the principal characters there was a large chorus, which was responsible for the choral elements in the action and the music; and over and above the chorus the careful composer of the oratorio has recorded with patient minuteness the necessity of two youths among the characters who might declaim the musical prologue. To accompany the songs of these various performers there was a small orchestra, consisting of a harpsichord, a 'double lyre,' which we may perhaps identify with a viol da gamba or 'violoncello,' a large or double guitar, and two flutes. The orchestra is oddly composed and strangely balanced. A modern musician will be apt to ask, Where are the violins? There is no part written for the violin in Emilio's score, but he has added the quaint suggestion that the soprano part of the music could be greatly improved if a violin were to play in unison with the voice throughout. The monotony which would arise from such an arrangement does not seem to have struck him. His orchestra was carefully hidden from view; and in the excessive solicitude for their concealment Wagnerians may recognise an anticipation of Wagner's similar precautions. The Baireuth master required his orchestra to be hidden, in order that they might offer no interruption between the real and the ideal—the real was represented by the spectators in the house, and the ideal was denoted by the imaginative drama on the stage. We know not if Emilio del Cavaliere had so abstruse and fanciful a theory for the concealment of his orchestra. At any rate, he was as careful of the fact as Wagner was in the expression of the theory.

In lieu of a visible orchestra, he made another suggestion, which Wagner in one at least of his operas has likewise initiated and acted upon. In 'Tannhäuser' we all remember that the minstrels make great play with their harps, and the sense of reality is greatly heightened by the fact of our perceiving music to be made by actual instruments on the stage, instead of merely resounding from the invisible swell of sound pouring from the orchestra. The Father of the Oratorio has made a suggestion still more realistic than any occasional introduction such as the above. He recommends that all the characters in the oratorio should, wherever possible, carry their own instruments in their hands, and pretend to play their own accompaniments directly the music strikes up. Old Father Time

was thus to be furnished with a lyre; Pleasure, with a guitar; and the other characters with instruments adapted to their nature; and the whole of the *dramatis personæ* were to be, at least in appearance, musicians. We do not know if this requirement of Emilio's was carried out entirely as he desired it; we rather suspect that the managers of entertainments in those days were as ruthless as they are at present, and cut down the schemes of composers directly they exceeded the bounds of the *sine quâ non*.

An overture to the oratorio was first performed; but in place of an instrumental overture as at present, the prelude was delivered by a chorus, and was, in fact, a madrigal, although it received a more dignified name. The curtain then rose, and the two youths, specially designed for the office in the list of characters, delivered the prologue. At the conclusion of this, Father Time came on the stage and performed a long and elaborate solo. When his aria was finished, the Body made its appearance, and in the midst of an impassioned declamation threw away its golden collar and the feathers from its hat, presumably, we suppose, to indicate that it would have no more to do with worldly vanities.

The World and Life were then to have a duet, and, like the Body, were gradually to divest themselves of their gay and gaudy attire, until at last they were merely clad in rags, 'very wretched, and ultimately dead bodies.' The general idea of the piece, as may be gathered from this, was to show the transitory nature of all worldly grandeur, and its nothingness in comparison with the higher things of the soul.

But what must ever amaze us in the account of this 'First Oratorio,' is to discover that at certain points in the action all the characters joined in a dance. The fact of the performance taking place in a church does not seem to have suggested that there was anything incongruous in a dance. At any rate, not only did the spectators welcome the dances as a very essential addition to the entertainment, but the composer himself was very careful to denote the various kinds of dances which might be employed. He suggests the Galliard, the Courante, and one or two more, and recommends the four principal singers to 'embellish their dancing with capers.'

At first sight, we might imagine that the introduction of the dances was only occasional throughout the oratorio, but there is good ground for believing that at the end of every verse the singer performed a dance on the stage, during the instrumental interlude which separated one verse from the other. Let us imagine Mr Edward Lloyd giving his hand to Madame Patey at the conclusion of every section of his solo, and turning her gracefully round the platform before he commenced a new one, and we shall have a fair idea of the extraordinary nature of the entertainment, which at that time attracted the admiration of all Rome.

From this humble beginning, and by constant improvement, and abridgment of the elements of bad taste in the old form, the oratorio grew and developed to the chaste, sober, and magnificent interpreter of the religious impulse which we know it to be at present. But at first it was the quaint and almost ridiculous entertainment which we have just described. And those

who also admire its greatest achievement to-day, would hardly recognise the relationship between our nineteenth-century displays and 'The First Oratorio.'

POMONA.*

By the Author of *Laddie, Tip Cat, Lil, &c.*

CHAPTER XV.

Glad and well aware
Of the most genial brightness, as a tree
Expands its leaves to meet the noontide glare,
So basks she in love's light contentedly.

EMMA RHODES.

'HER ladyship's love, Miss, and she would be glad if you could go to her room.'

Mona Lester had just come in from her morning ride in the Row. It was a beautiful morning, early in May, and the Park looked green and bright, and the horse chestnuts were lighting up their tapers pink and white, and the laburnum's golden chains tossed in the fresh, little breeze which ruffled the glowing bravery of the lilacs.

Mona had had a very pleasant ride. The day was fresh and exhilarating; her new little chestnut mare was all that heart could desire, with a skin like satin, and a mouth like velvet, which, by the way, are contemptible similes, as most of the similes we use about nature are, for 'Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.' Mona looked, as most girls do, her very best on horseback; and without any vanity, or as little as human nature is capable of, there is a satisfaction in appearing to advantage. She had met a good many people she knew, and among them the Mr Moore she had met at dinner at Mrs Coppleston's, and who had told her about Mr Ludlow and the picture. She had stopped some time talking to him; he was very pleasant, and she thought she liked him better than most of the men she had come across lately. He was not quite so much of the one uniform pattern; and he was certainly very good-looking. She would get mother to send him a card for their next 'at home.'

She was thinking this as, in consequence of the servant's message, she went, before changing her habit, to Lady Lester's room and softly opened the door. The room of an invalid, with light and temperature and sound and scent all subdued and softened down, and deprived of the pleasant inequalities and variations of healthy, every-day life; no sunshine or brisk breeze, or shrill birds singing, or wholesome smell of fresh-turned earth or salt-sea breath. The worn shadowy face that raised itself from the pillows as Mona entered, looked as if any sudden shock might take the feeble life out of it in a moment; and the pale hand that stretched towards her looked as if it had no strength even for that slight effort, but dropped to her side before Mona had crossed the room. No contrast could have been greater than that between the mother and daughter, who came in like a very incarnation of health and youth and life and energy.

'Dearest,' she said, 'you are not so well this morning?'

'There is nothing much the matter,' the weak

voice answered; 'only Dr Craddock has been here, and he has been urging me to go down to Beechfield with as little delay as possible.'

'Oh, mother, let us go!'

'Yes, that is just it.' There was the slightly fretful tone of an invalid perceptible in the soft persuasive voice. 'I knew you would say so; and I will not go if it means dragging you away from London at the very beginning of the season.'

'There is no dragging about it.' Pomona had tossed off her hat, and sat down on a low stool by her mother's sofa, where the invalid's hand could smooth the soft plaits or stroke the blossom-tinted cheek.

'I know that, my darling; but it will make me feel wretched and selfish if I let you do so. I want you to agree to my going down with Morris, and Lady Charter is coming up and taking my place. She is longing to come to town, and she knows all our set; and you like her, and she is very fond of you. You can run down for a day now and then, to cheer me up when there's nothing very delightful going on, or there's any engagement you want to get out of. Yes; I know it will spoil it all. I like to think that half the pleasure is sharing it with me; and it's mere selfishness on my part to make you stay, for I want to have a description of everything that goes on.'

'Mother, let me come!' Lady Lester's tired eyes closed wearily. 'You know I am perfectly happy at Beechfield. It will be lovely there now, and the nightingales singing, and the lanes full of primroses; and I can drive you out with Tom and Jerry; and I have seen a lovely, little carriage that does not shake an atom—and every one would be away, and we should be all to ourselves. It would be a sort of honeymoon; and I would do everything for you instead of Morris, and sleep in your room.—Oh mother, let me come!'

She could not tell how alluring the prospect was to Lady Lester to have her darling all to herself. Though Pomona was her only one, it was quite curious how little she had had her to herself. Even as a baby, grand nurses and nursery regulations had come between them. She remembered how she used to envy the cottage mothers rocking their sunburnt babies to sleep at their open doors, or even gypsy tramps with little black-eyed babies tied on their shoulders, who could turn and kiss the dirty, little face nestling against their neck at any moment of the dreary day. Later on, education had interfered. All the most elaborate modern machinery of education must be brought to bear on the child. Lady Lester's friends said she had education on the brain; even the holidays were pervaded by the presence of holiday governesses. If it was not education, it was health, which is perhaps in these days a more important consideration than any other. In our modern Pantheon, the goddess Hygieia is the one who has the greatest number of worshippers, and at her bidding, people submit to banishment and torture, and live hard lives of self-denial and asceticism, such as they would hardly endure for any other cause. So it happened that perhaps at the very moment when Lady Lester and her little girl might have been happy together, the

mother would fancy that the child looked pale or languid, or was beginning to stoop, and she would be sent off to the seaside or to more bracing air away from home.

Then, when education was finished, and Pomona had grown as fair an example of beautiful health as heart could desire, society stepped in, and society is the greatest tyrant of all, who, though she does not exact such painful sacrifices as health, is a harder taskmaster than ever Pharaoh was, and keeps her slaves working night and day on the treadmill that we call pleasure.

And through the ceaseless round of society loomed the certain prospect of Pomona's marriage, which would separate them finally. Of course she would marry—of course Lady Lester wished her to do so, though her very heart bled at the idea. Already many times during the two years since she came out, this suicidal wish seemed likely to be realised. Pomona was much admired, and her large fortune showed off her attractions to the greatest advantage; but hitherto the girl had remained heart-whole, and had declined offers which most girls would have thought irresistible.

She enjoyed her life immensely; the admiration and homage she received was very gratifying to her; but it was quite as gratifying from one man as another; and directly it became too demonstrative, it grew tiresome.

'I wish they wouldn't!' she said one day, with the letter of one of her suitors in her hand. 'I liked this Captain Lupton so much, so very much. He danced perfectly, and was so amusing. Why couldn't he have been satisfied with dancing and talking? And now there is an end of it all.—I think I am too much in love with you, mother,' the girl would say; 'I don't want any lover but you!' And Lady Lester, looking at the lovely face, could not be surprised that Captain Lupton and the others could not be satisfied.

But now Lady Lester would not be persuaded to gratify herself to her heart's content with this true love, and leave the noisy rattle and glare of London for the lovely quiet of Beechfield, where the tender green buds were opening, and the hawthorn snow covering the hedges, and the blue-bells in the coverts mimicking the sky, and the nightingale's long note softly touching the silence.

'You must not vex me, my darling,' she said, stroking with a caressing hand the soft cheek. 'I am one of those tyrannical invalids that must not be crossed, Dr Craddock says. I must not be worried, and it will worry me constantly if I think I am taking you away. I want you to help me, not to make it harder for me. I have seen Parry, and he is going to make all the arrangements for my going down this afternoon. It is a fine day, and I am pretty well; and I may not be so fit for the journey to-morrow; but I am a little bit tired now, and must rest.—But before you go, there is something I want to tell you, and something I want you to do, which I meant to do myself while we were in London; but I have not been well enough to see to it.'

'Don't trouble about it now, mother dear,' Mona said. She was sore and sad at her mother's decision, and a little bit hurt, though she would not show it, at its having been decided before telling her; and she feared that Dr Craddock

must think badly of her mother, to insist on her going home so immediately.

'I want to tell you now. It has been very much on my mind lately, especially these nights when I sleep so badly. There is a relation of your father's. I think it is a girl, but I am not sure. But I think she must be about your age.'

'One of the Lesters?'

'No. A sister of your father's married beneath her, and they were all very angry about it.'

'Oh! a sister of father's? Then she is my aunt?'

'She is dead; but there was a child. I never knew much of the mother. I think she was at my wedding; but when I went to visit old Lady Lester, this sister was not at home, and she never came to us.'

'Whom did she marry?'

'I think it was a doctor; but I forget. Sir John was dreadfully upset about it, unnecessarily so, I thought at the time. But he would not have her mentioned. She died a year after she married; and, I think, left a baby; but I was ill and unhappy just then myself, and selfishly taken up with my own affairs; so I never made any inquiries.'

'Did you say the daughter was about my age?'

'Yes; I fancy so.'

'Then it must have been just when I was born?'

'Yes; that year.'

'And you were unhappy?'

'Till I had you, my darling, not after that.'

'What was her name?'

'That I cannot recollect, even if I ever heard. But Mr Freestone, our lawyer, can tell us.'

'And what do you want me to do, dearest mother?'

'To find out about her, and be kind to her, for I cannot help thinking it is a girl. It has been very remiss in me to have let all these years go by without trying to find her; but at first it vexed your father to make any allusion to it; and then, never hearing anything of them, the whole matter seemed to pass away from my mind. It was very wrong of me; but, Mona, you will do your best to make up for my neglect. I have been thinking, too, that anything I have to leave should go to her. You will not want it, my darling; but if they are poor, it might be acceptable to them.—And when you have seen Mr Freestone, and found out about the girl, I shall get him to come down to Beechfield and add a codicil to my will.'

The girl's arms were round her mother's neck with the terror that is not confined only to the ignorant and superstitious, but comes to many at the thought of providing against the sad but certain emergency of death; for though setting the house in order does not hasten the coming of that solemn guest, it makes us listen for his chariot wheels.

So Pomona threw her young arms round Lady Lester's neck, entreating her not to talk of such things; there was plenty of time to think of it—years in which they might find out this young unknown cousin, and help and be kind to her.

'Give her as much as you like, but don't talk of leaving it to her.'

And then, with sudden remorse at the wan,

faint look in her mother's face, she laid her tenderly back on her pillows, dashing away the hot tears that had welled up, and smothering the impulsive words of love and protest against dreary anticipations on her lips.

'I will do just what you wish, dearest—only now you must rest and be quite quiet, if you are to be fit for the journey to Beechfield.'

THE HIGHER ATMOSPHERE.

On the 19th of September 1783, a sheep, a cock, and a duck were carried in a free balloon to a height of fifteen hundred feet. They reached the ground again without injury, except that the unfortunate rooster had his wing broken by a kick bestowed upon him by his four-footed companion during the excitement of embarkation. These were the first aerial voyagers.

The first human traveller through the air was M. François Pilâtre de Rozier, who gained the distinction, in the middle of the following month, by mounting in a free balloon. Although the honour of first using this new power in the cause of science must go to France, yet it was from experiments conducted in England that the most satisfactory results were obtained. In 1859 the British Association for the Advancement of Science met at Aberdeen, and appointed a Committee to organise the steps necessary for taking a series of experiments in the upper strata of the atmosphere by means of balloon ascents. Nothing, however, was done for two years, and then at Manchester the question was revived, and the splendid ascents by Messrs Glaisher and Coxwell were the result. Four of these took place from Wolverhampton, and during one of them the intrepid voyagers attained an elevation of over seven miles. This is the highest point that has been, or probably will be, reached. The explorers were rendered unconscious by the great cold and the extreme rarity of the air; and no doubt the thirty-seven thousand feet to which they ascended marks the approximate limit beyond which it is impossible for human beings to exist even during the short limit of a balloon voyage.

Man is especially adapted to dwell at the bottom of the great aerial ocean that envelops the earth. He is intended to support an atmospheric pressure of about fifteen pounds on the square inch, and the outward pressure from within is so arranged by nature that equilibrium is maintained. But if he chooses to reduce this normal pressure by climbing a high mountain, for example, bodily distress must follow. The outward pressure of the bodily fluids have then little save the skin to keep them in check, and this they break through where it is weakest, and distressing bleeding is the result. The lungs, though painfully distended, cannot obtain a sufficient supply of the life-giving oxygen, and the slightest bodily exertion is attended with pain and difficulty. From the necessity of this exertion, the balloonist is to a great extent exempt; but though he may husband his vital resources as carefully as possible, the probability is that no human being can, ascend above the height reached by Messrs Glaisher and Coxwell, and live.

Modern science, however, by providing self-reg-

istering instruments that are but little removed from absolute perfection, precludes the necessity of any life-risk being incurred in ascertaining the temperature and pressure of that section of the higher atmosphere reachable by a balloon. By means of these and a specially constructed balloon, it has been found possible to obtain accurate information at the height of ten miles. To M. Hermite belongs the credit of the most recent explorations in this direction. A small balloon was constructed capable of carrying apparatus weighing some thirty-five or forty pounds. The material employed was triple gold-beater's skin highly varnished. Among the self-registering instruments which formed the freight of the balloon was a mechanism which distributed inquiry cards. It was hoped by means of these to trace exactly the course followed by the balloon in its aerial flight. This ingenious contrivance was worked by a fuse, which unfortunately died out when the rarer strata of air were encountered, no doubt through lack of oxygen.

When everything was ready, the captive balloon was released, and it immediately shot upwards with a velocity of eighty feet per second, and remained in sight for forty-five minutes. The lowest pressure registered was less than one-seventh of an atmosphere, and this would give an approximate elevation of over ten miles. The self-registering thermometer showed a minimum temperature of -51° Centigrade or 92° Fahrenheit below the freezing-point of water. At this time the balloon was just upon eight miles high. The self-registering barometer and thermometer now ceased to record, probably owing to the ink becoming frozen. When a further ascent of two miles had been made, they resumed duty, however, the direct heat of the sun having probably thawed the recording ink. The temperature rose to -21° Centigrade or 38° Fahrenheit lower than the freezing-point of water. This experiment confirms previous experience as to the alternation of layers of atmosphere of irregularly varying temperatures. It will thus be seen that there is little difficulty in obtaining reliable data as to atmospheric pressure and temperature up to a height of ten miles. The use of aluminium for the metallic portion of the instruments ensures that no superfluous weight shall be carried.

In the experiment we have described, the balloon and its freight weighed about fifty-five or sixty pounds, and everything was done to conduce to lightness without sacrificing strength. To obtain records at a height of fifteen or twenty miles is a problem which, though capable of solution, will entail an enormous expense. To begin with—the balloon, instead of being six yards in diameter, will have to be enormously larger, as also will the enclosing bamboo cage, if that method of protecting it is resorted to. All this means an increased weight, and of course reduces the advantage gained by increasing the magnitude of the balloon. At the same time, it is quite possible that the ever-increasing interest which is taken in the study of storms and weather problems may lead to observations being more frequently taken by balloons at moderate heights. Many students of weather-lore assert that the key to much that is puzzling in meteorological phenomena is to be found in the air-movements above the currents at the earth's surface. So that it is

possible that, along with the provision of high-level observatories, balloons may be requisitioned to a greater extent than they are at present in obtaining the data necessary to successful weather forecasting. But, after all, twenty miles is but a fraction of the distance to which the atmospheric envelope reaches. The fleecy bands of delicate cirrus cloud have been described by aerial navigators as being apparently as far removed when viewed at an elevation of five miles as they appear from the surface of the earth. The beautiful phenomena of the twilight proves that the atmosphere extends to a distance of forty-five miles from the earth. It is hardly possible to form any estimate of the extreme rarity of the air at this elevation. At such a distance from the earth, the attractive influence is weak; so that the existent air may be said to do no more than feebly dilute the ubiquitous ether which our theories of the transmission of light and heat conceive to fill all space.

The weight of the atmosphere is such that it would take 1,200,000 to equal the weight of the earth itself. At a height of three and a half miles the belt of atmosphere ascended through weighs one-half of the whole. At twice the elevation the barometer stands at between six and seven inches; while, as we have already seen, the atmosphere above the balloon floating at a height of ten miles, only exerted a pressure equal to one-seventh of that indicated at the sea-level. At a height of thirty-five miles, the outer-lying layer of air weighs only one-thousandth as much as the whole atmosphere. At twice this distance from the earth's surface, air that occupied at the sea-level a single cubic foot, would be expanded to fill a space one million times as great. Probably, air in an extremely attenuated condition exists to a distance of two hundred miles from the surface of the earth. There must be some line of demarcation approached by slight gradations of atmospheric intensity, beyond which there is absolutely no air whatever. The geographical position of this line it is impossible to locate; but it is comparatively easy to determine the conditions that must obtain there. Air, of course, follows the general law of gases, so that its particles repel each other: the earth, too, as it spins round on its axis tends to throw off its atmospheric encasement and scatter it into space. The force which binds the aerial mass to us is the earth's gravity—the attraction of gravitation, as it is commonly designated. When the point is reached where this force is equal to the two forces which tend to drive the air away from us, it is certain that there can be no air beyond. Where this point is situated, however, is another matter, for the simple reason, as the song puts it, that 'there's no one that knows.'

The investigations that have been made of late years into the question of meteorites, shooting-stars, &c., have thrown considerable light upon the question of the extent of our atmosphere. It is well known that what is commonly called a shooting-star is one of immense numbers of bodies which revolve round the sun. These our earth is continually encountering, though at certain seasons in much greater numbers than others. Altogether, it is estimated that an average of four hundred millions of these bodies come within the earth's influence daily. When fairly within the

sphere of the earth's attraction, they begin to fall rapidly towards us; and when they enter our atmosphere, the friction with the particles of air heats them to such an extent that they become luminous. This luminosity increases with the heat until, as it generally happens, the meteor is reduced to vapour, and disappears in a 'blaze of glory.' Now, it is clear that as these bodies are invisible until the atmosphere is entered, their light is due to the heat developed by friction. Consequently, if the astronomer can determine their distance from the earth when first they become visible, we are justified in assuming that the atmosphere extends to that distance. In the November meteor shower, in which the falling bodies are very small, it is estimated that they begin to burn at a height of seventy-five or eighty miles, so that we have proof positive that our atmosphere, dry and attenuated as it must there be, makes its influence very decidedly felt at that distance.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DESERT.

By ERNEST FAVENC, Author of *The Last of Str.* &c.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

SUNRISE on the western plains of Queensland during the tropical summer-time has a peculiar character of its own. Probably the night has been calm and sultry; but as the hour of daylight approaches, light puffs of warm wind come sighing across the almost treeless expanse. There is no hesitation about the dawn, no long, lingering half-light. A streak of gray brightens in the east, widening quickly, and turning a soft, rosy pink; it blots out all the host of stars of lesser magnitude. Soon, none save the brightest are visible. The brilliant triple-jewelled belt of Orion, most perfect of all constellations; the Cross of the South lying horizontally near the earth, with the two steadfast pointers above; and, glorious over all, in pure, lustrous splendour, the Star of the Morning, surrounded with the opal tints of the fast-brightening eastern sky.

The far-stretching plain seems now to bound into sudden distinctiveness of detail, and on the horizon a tremulous shimmering is visible, foretelling another day of heat. The sun's upper limb appears, large, red, and glowing, and all the stars die out. Angrily it looms through the quivering haze, mounts until three parts of the disc is visible, then, seemingly, gives a sudden bound of two or three degrees above the horizon, and day has commenced.

A summer's day in December! For twelve unclouded hours the orb of fire will relentlessly blast, and scorch, and wither all the surviving vegetation that the past months have spared. Soon the cattle who have been feeding out in the open country during the night-time will come slowly stringing along in single file, to seek the shelter of the trees that fringe the banks of the river. Here, in such scanty shade as the vertical sun allows the thinly foliaged trees to afford, they will ruminate all day until the cooler hours of night again tempt them forth to feed. The river is no rushing, babbling stream; for the most part the bed is dry, sandy, or shingly, the water-holes being often miles apart. For the

three months of the wet season it is a deep uncrossable torrent; for the remaining nine, a string of isolated pools.

On the bank of such a river, opposite the end of one of these pools, two men are saddling their horses. There has been a prolonged drought, and what little grass remains looks dry and white; the horses show signs of having been ridden hard the day before, and are pinched about the flanks, as if they had not made a satisfactory meal during the night. The fire, beside which the men have slept, is still smouldering, and their tin quart pots full of tea are standing near it. The saddles put on, the two men hitch their bridles on to a neighbouring sapling, and sit down to discuss a primitive breakfast of salt beef and bread, washed down with tea sweetened with coarse brown sugar. Both are dressed in collarless Crimean shirts, moleskin trousers, and leggings; both wear the soft felt hat that has superseded the once typical cabbage-tree, and carry revolvers in their belts, for it is the early days of the seventies, and this is a newly settled pioneer cattle station, and as yet the natives are still dangerous. Although one is the owner of the station, and the other his stockman, no distinction is visible either in dress or appearance. They have been on a long excursion down the river after some truant stock, and have camped for the night to recruit their tired horses.

Their hasty meal finished, they are about to mount and start, when a noise on the opposite side of the river attracts their attention. A man, on foot, comes limping painfully down the bank, and on reaching the water's edge, throws himself down on the sand, and plunging his face in the pool, drinks thirstily and greedily.

'Who can that be?' mutters the elder of the two men, for the apparition is unexpected. They silently watch the new-comer until he lifts his head after his deep draught; then one of them shouts to him. The stranger has been too eager to attain the life-saving water to notice them; but at the sound of the voice he now starts and looks up, then eagerly waving his hand, commences to cross the dry bed of the river. When he reaches the bank, he wearily surmounts it, and throws himself down with a sigh of relief.

'You seem to have had a bad time of it,' says the man who had spoken before.—'Better put a quart on, Jim,' he goes on, nodding to his companion, who puts the fire together, unbuckles the quart pot hanging by a short strap from his saddle, and goes down the bank to fill it.

The tired man recovers himself somewhat, and answers faintly: 'Yes; I am just about done.' He certainly looks it. His sun-scorched face and arms are lean and gaunt with famine; his eyes are still bright and feverish with thirst; and his belt is drawn tightly round his pinched waist. In his hand he still holds a canvas water-bag, the dry collapsed sides of which evince that it is long since it has held water. Above all, he has, in his fixed gaze and nervous manner, the indescribable appearance that besets a man after a long, solitary struggle for life.

'Where have you sprung from?' says his interrogator, after a pause, during which Jim, who has returned, places the quart pot on the rekindled fire, and produces what remnants of their meal are left.

'I started out six months ago with the Pattens, the two brothers, to look for new country; there were four of us, accounting the black boy.'

'Your name is Burgess, then, I suppose? We imagined you must have made in for the Overland Telegraph Line, as you were so long away.'

'We should have done better if we had,' returns the stranger; 'as it is, I am the only one left.'

'Is it possible? How did you come to grief?'

'We lost a number of our horses on a patch of poison-plant country—that was the first misfortune. Then no rain fell all the time we were away; and coming back, we got on to a dry stage, and found that the water-hole we had depended on had been dry for weeks. The elder Patten and all the remainder of the horses died of thirst; but the younger one, the black boy, and I, managed to reach water in the Herbert River. There, the blacks got on to us; and as we had abandoned nearly all our ammunition, we had no show at all. The boy was killed, and young Patten so badly wounded that he died two days afterwards. That was more than a fortnight ago; and I have been crawling on ever since.'

'How far did you manage to get out?'

'A long way across the South Australian border. It was coming back all the trouble overtook us.'

By this time the quart pot was boiling, the tea made; and the famished man attacked the food voraciously.

'It is ten good miles to the station,' said Hopwood, the owner. 'Supposing you rest here, and I will send a man and a spare horse down, for you to ride up.'

The other nodded a weary assent. 'Leave me your pipe and some tobacco,' he said, 'and I shall be all right.'

The two men mounted and rode away; and the rescued man, after lighting the pipe with an ember from the fire, lay under the shade of a tree enjoying the welcome luxury. His smoke finished, he rose, and looked around on the lifeless plain. No living object was visible. Putting his hand in the bosom of his shirt he drew forth some folded papers and a small note-book; then seating himself in the best available shade, with his back against a tree, he commenced to write in the note-book with the small leaden pencil appertaining to it. He wrote slowly, like a man unaccustomed to use a pen much, and it was more than an hour before his task was completed; then he leaned back against the tree, lost in thought. The place where he was had evidently on many occasions been used for camping purposes; several empty tins that had formerly contained preserved meats or fish were lying about. Rising, he picked up an empty salmon tin, and after tearing a blank sheet out of the note-book, placed the book and the other papers inside. Next he scraped the ashes of the fire away, and on the site it had occupied dug a small hole with a stick in the sandy soil. In this hole he placed the tin with the papers; and having filled it up again, rekindled the fire over the place, thus hiding all traces of what he had done. He looked carefully at the different trees, many of which were marked with initials rudely cut with knives or tomahawks; these he noted down on the blank sheet

he had retained, then stepped the number of paces from the fire to the nearest tree and put that down. He folded the paper up and put it in his trouser pocket, threw the tiny pencil on the fire, and laid himself down once more under the tree to await the coming relief.

All the time he had been occupied, his face had worn a nervous, suspicious look; and several times he had glanced stealthily around, as though even in that solitude he feared that he was watched. This look left his face as he threw the pencil in the fire, and he quickly fell into a profound, untroubled sleep. He was a young man, with a simple, honest face, though somewhat undecided and weak—a man who gave you the idea that while he had plenty of physical courage and tenacity, he could be dominated by a stronger will and intellect.

About the middle of the afternoon, Jim Turner, the stockman, appeared, leading a spare horse; and the pair were soon on their way to the station.

The homestead, called Bendabar, which they reached just before dark, consisted of a couple of huts with mud walls and thatched roofs and verandas; and a rude stockyard and milking-yard.

Burgess was made as comfortable as circumstances permitted, and in a week or two had fairly recovered from his privations, and was well enough to travel east to Rockhampton and take steamer to the southern colony where his home was.

The story he retold with more detail was substantially the same as that he first related to Hopwood. Naturally, it found its way into the principal Australian newspapers; and after exciting the usual comment, died a natural death.

Hopwood received one letter from Burgess, notifying his safe arrival, returning the money advanced for his expenses, and thanking him for the assistance rendered.

Ten years have passed, and the cattle station that was is now a well-known sheep station; a comfortable house and all the necessary out-buildings have long replaced the primitive mud huts, and miles of wire-fencing radiate in all directions. The wave of settlement has swept on to the westward for hundreds of miles, and the solitude that witnessed the fate of the Pattens has been stocked and settled.

Only one evidence of the tragedy has come to light. The bones of the horses that perished on the poison-patch have been found; but no trace of human remains has been forthcoming. Bendabar, where Burgess arrived, had been sold and resold since that event, and the occupants had changed several times, so that the story of the man's rescue was now only a hearsay tradition.

One evening a stranger rode up to the homestead and requested an interview with the manager. After presenting a letter of introduction from the firm that owned the station, he briefly stated his business. His name was Patten; he was a younger brother of the men who had perished ten years before; he had lately received a letter from Burgess, not long dead, which letter was only to be forwarded after Burgess's death, informing Patten that the writer had buried

certain papers on the spot where Hopwood had picked him up, giving him marks and indications how to find the place, and winding up with a mysterious intimation that Patten did not just then specify. 'Can you show me the place, Mr Owen?' said the visitor in conclusion.

'I know the place, roughly speaking,' replied the manager. 'It still goes by the name of "Burgess's Relief;" but without Hopwood or Turner it would be hard to find the exact spot. The last big flood altered the position of the water-holes a good deal.'

'Burgess says in his letter that it had been often used for a camping-ground, and that several of the trees round about were marked with initials, of which he encloses a list.'

'Unfortunately for your purpose, we have used a good deal of timber from that part, and ten to one these marked trees have been cut down. However, I will drive you down tomorrow morning, and we will have a look.'

Early the following day, Owen and his guest drove down to the place. 'This,' said the manager as they pulled up, 'is the place known as Burgess's Relief; but the exact spot I cannot indicate. This used to be the end of the water-hole, so I should say it was somewhere about here. As you can see, the water now extends nearly half a mile farther.'

Patten took out a piece of paper from his pocket, and read: 'Five paces up the river from a gum-tree much marked; the initials A. F. H. over J. L. facing "the plant." Another gum-tree farther down, with R. O. and M. H. marked on it; and up the river a coolibah tree with a cross on it.'

'We had better turn the horses out and have a systematic search,' said Owen; 'that coolibah tree is the best clue, as it is not likely to have been cut down.'

The horses were unharnessed and hobbled out, and the two men went opposite ways up and down the river, examining all the trees. They returned and exchanged reports of their ill success.

'Without either Hopwood or Jim Turner, I am afraid I have not much chance,' remarked Patten.

'Did you make any inquiries about them?'

'Yes, as I came here. Hopwood is in New Zealand. Turner was last heard of three years ago, going out to the Northern Territory with a mob of travelling cattle.'

'Advertise in the leading papers.'

'That will be best, I think, and quickest.'

'How were the things buried?'

'In an old salmon tin; and that reminds me that Burgess said there were many lying about.'

'There are any amount of empty tins lying about now, for the splitters have camped all up and down this bank.—What was his reason for burying the papers?'

'That I am not at liberty to relate; but'—Patten went on, as if to make up for the abruptness of this answer: 'I may as well tell you that the two relatives of mine who were lost were only half-brothers, although I find they were regarded as brothers here. The youngest was my elder, and my own brother; the other, who was six years the senior, was our half-brother.'

Whether it was fancy or not, Owen could not decide, but he imagined there was a certain ring of dislike in his companion's voice as he spoke of this half-brother.

They caught and harnessed up the horses, and were about starting, when Patten said suddenly, and as though he had been thinking the matter over: 'I may as well trust you, if I ask you to keep it to yourself. I must find those papers, for I have reason to suspect foul-play, and the truth lies in them.'

'The truth of what?' said Owen, in surprise.

'How my brother died,' returned Patten.

'Did Burgess murder him?'

'No; but he knew who did. He told some of the truth, but not all the truth: my brother's wounds were not inflicted by the natives.'

'But if Burgess did not do it, who did? Your half-brother died of thirst beforehand.'

'Did he?' said Patten, as he stepped into the buggy. 'I have a strong belief that he is as much alive as you and I are now.'

THE STORY OF A PALACE.

STRANGE have been the vicissitudes of the famous building which is henceforth to be the home of the Royal United Service Institution. Originally a Royal Banqueting House, it degenerated at odd times into an arena for the sale of pictures by auction. Next, the stately chamber became sanctified as the Chapel Royal, Whitehall; now it is again secularised for the purposes of a Naval and Military Museum.

There is no building in London more sentimentally and historically connected with the life of the nation. Its varied fortunes are inseparably bound up with the eventful story of the Palace of Whitehall. How the name Whitehall originated, nobody seems able to tell with any certainty. Philip II., in a marginal note to a despatch, says: 'There is a park between it [the Palace of St James's] and the Palace called Huytal; but why it is so called, I am sure I don't know.' One old writer points out that Whitehall was a name sometimes given by our ancestors to the festive room of their habitations. But the place did not always bear that name; it used to be called York House. This arose from the fact that the Blackfriars or Dominican monks in the thirteenth century sold the site to the then Archbishop of York for his town residence; and he bequeathed it to his successors in that dignity. Here Wolsey held brilliant state. At the height of the wily Cardinal's affluence and luxury, he reared, in the words of an old statute, 'many and distinct, beautiful and costly lodgings, buildings, and mansions; laid out a park environed with brick and stone; and devised and ordained many and singular commodious things, pleasures and other necessities, apt and convenient to so noble a prince, for his singular comfort, pastime, and solace.' On Wolsey's disgrace in 1530, the property passed into the possession of his master, Henry VIII., and changed its name. This is referred to by Shakespeare in the lines:

You must no more call it York-place, that's past;
For, since the Cardinal fell, that title's lost;
'Tis now the king's, and call'd Whitehall.

Under the new regime the Palace was enlarged and beautified; but it was not until the time of James I. that there was any idea of replacing it by still more ambitious designs. Towards the close of that reign, the famous architect, Inigo Jones, prepared elaborate plans. His scheme was a stupendous one, and altogether beyond the means then available to royalty. It would have covered twenty-four acres; whereas Hampton Court Palace occupies but eight or nine acres, and St James's Palace only four. Old Whitehall had occupied a large space of ground, having one front towards the Thames, and another facing St James's Park, intersected by a public thoroughfare from Charing Cross to Westminster, crossed by two gates. The Palace had a succession of galleries and courts, a chapel, a tennis court, a cockpit, and a banqueting room. The last-named feature was burned down in 1618; and the new Banqueting House, commenced in the following year, was the only portion of Inigo Jones's design ever carried out. It was completed in 1622 at a cost of about fifteen thousand pounds. As Surveyor-general, Jones had for salary eight shillings and fourpence per day, with an allowance of four pounds a year for rent, besides the wage of a clerk and some incidental expenses.

The ceiling of the hall is lined with colossal pictures representing the apotheosis of James I., painted by Rubens in 1635, at a cost of about three thousand pounds. Two years previously the Banqueting House had been the scene of a famous masque and anti-masque, for the performance of which the services of the best English and continental musicians of the day, with the richest costumes and accessories, were secured. In the days preceding the Civil War, the hall was often used for similar revelry. Although erected for purposes of feasting and pleasure, it is mainly associated in the popular mind with one of the most tragic episodes in the history of a stirring time, for it was through one of its front windows that King Charles I. was led forth to execution in 1649. It was a bitter morning in January, and, we are told, he put on two shirts, so that the cold weather should by no chance cause His Majesty to shiver. An unknown headsmen, with his countenance concealed by a crape visor, waited outside upon the scaffold, where the block was ready for the ill-fated monarch. The warrant decreed that he should be beheaded in the open street before Whitehall—that is, opposite the main entrance to what is now known as the Horse Guards.

In March 1657 the Speaker, at the head of the whole House of Commons, repaired to the Banqueting House to present to the Lord Protector the humble petition and advice of the House. Cromwell, attended by the officers of State, went there to receive them, listened to the address of the Speaker, and promised an early reply. The 'humble advice' was the proffer of the crown. A reply came in writing on April 3d, gratefully declining the regal honour. To the same hall, four years earlier, Cromwell had returned in State from the Chancery Court, where he had received the Great Seal and listened to the reading of the Parchment reciting the powers with which His Excellency was invested.

As the last dread moments of the late king were connected with the Banqueting House, so

the first hours of the reign of Charles II., so far as concerned his public appearances, were also associated with it, for on his arrival in London he went there to receive both Houses of Parliament. Through the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker, they conveyed their felicitations to His Majesty, and received from him those assurances of future conduct which were so soon forgotten. Pepys tells us it was in the same hall that, on the 23d of June, the king touched certain poor people as a cure for the king's evil, after they had waited all the morning in the rain. The quaint diarist did not himself remain long enough on that occasion to witness the ceremony, as he records having seen it for the first time in April 1661. He says that 'Charles did it with great gravity;' and adds, 'It seemed to me to be an ugly task, yet a simple one.'

It was from the top of the Banqueting House, in August 1662, that Pepys saw the return to London of the king and his wife from their honeymoon at Hampton Court. Sometimes the tide rose so high at Whitehall as to flood the kitchens of the palace. Pepys illustrates this by a curious story of the Countess of Castlemaine, when the king was to sup with her, soon after the birth of her son the Duke of Grafton. The cook came and told the imperious lady that the water had flooded the kitchen, and that the beef for supper could not be roasted. 'Zounds!' replied the Countess, 'you may set the house on fire, but the beef *shall* be roasted.'

A still more curious picture of the water rising at Whitehall is contained in a speech of Charles II. to the House of Commons in the Banqueting House at Whitehall on March 1, 1661. 'The mention of my wife's arrival,' said the king, 'puts me in mind to desire you to put that compliment upon her that her entrance into the town may be with more decency than the way will now suffer it to be; and for that purpose, I pray you would quickly pass such laws as are before you in order to the mending of the way, and that she may not find Whitehall surrounded with water.' Lord Dorset alludes to this periodical inundation in his well-known song, 'To all you Ladies now on Land:—'

The king with wonder and surprise
Will swear the seas grow bold,
Because the tides will higher rise
Than e'er they used of old:
But let him know it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall-stairs.
With a fa la, la, la, la.

In February 1688 both Houses of the Convention waited in full strength upon the Prince and Princess of Orange in the Banqueting House to offer them the crown. The Prince replied on behalf of the Princess and himself, accepting the offer. The same day William and Mary were publicly proclaimed King and Queen. It was in their reign that a great part of Whitehall Palace was burned down through the neglect of a Dutchwoman, who had left some linen to dry before a fire in Colonel Stanley's rooms. The fire raged for seventeen hours, and about one hundred and fifty houses were consumed, extending to the water-side. The Banqueting House happily escaped injury, as it again did in 1698, when most of the remainder of the Palace was destroyed. This second fire was caused by the carelessness of

a maid-servant, who, about eight o'clock at night, to save the labour of cutting a candle from a pound, burned it off, and threw the rest aside before the flame was out. It was in the Banqueting House that Prince George of Denmark was married, on the 28th of July 1683, to the Princess Anne. Evelyn mentions under date June 1693, that in the same room there took place a great auction of pictures, including many specimens of Van Dyck and Rubens, the property of Lord Melford. Ten years previously, the hall had been put to a similar use. It was then, by the king's permission, employed as a saleroom for the disposal of pictures lately belonging to Sir Peter Lely. Queen Anne permitted Sir John Vanbrugh to build from the ruins of Whitehall the inadequate premises in which the Royal United Service Institution has hitherto been located. Its style, or rather want of style, excited the scorn of Swift, as expressed in the lines:

One asks the watermen hard by
Where may the poet's palace lie;
Another of the Thames inquires
If he has seen its gilded spires.
At length they in the rubbish spy
A thing resembling a goose-pye.

With the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty, the quondam Banqueting House assumed a new rôle, for George I. converted it into a Chapel Royal. The king himself presented a rich set of plate for sacred uses. In 1723 Oliver Cromwell's grandson was married there to a daughter of Sir Robert Thornhill by the then Bishop of London. Strange to say, although the place continued to be used during many years as a chapel, both for ordinary Sunday services and on State occasions, it was never consecrated. The chapel was closed for extensive repairs in 1829, and was not reopened until 1837. In the interval, upwards of fifteen thousand pounds was spent upon it. King William IV. and Queen Adelaide attended the reopening in state, that being the last occasion on which his majesty appeared in public at divine service.

During the present reign, the Prince and Princess of Wales attended service in the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, on two remarkable occasions. One was immediately after their marriage, when the late Archbishop Taft officiated as Dean, the late Dean Stanley preaching the sermon. The second was on the celebration of their silver wedding, when the Archbishop of Canterbury was present, and the Bishop of Peterborough preached the sermon. Their Royal Highnesses attended with all their children, accompanied by the Crown Prince and Princess of Denmark. The eagles and colours taken from the French in the campaigns in Egypt, and also in the Peninsular War, were for a time placed in the Chapel Royal. These trophies remained above the altar until the building was closed for repairs, when they were removed to the new Military Chapel in Birdcage Walk.

On every Maundy-Thursday—the day before Good-Friday—the Queen's eleemosynary bounty—a very ancient charity, for which silver pennies and other coins are specially minted—used to be distributed in the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, by the Lord High Almoner to a number of poor and aged men and women corresponding to the years

of the sovereign's age. These royal Maundy-Thursdays gifts are now bestowed in Westminster Abbey.

The Prince and Princess of Wales attended service in the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, on the Sunday of Her Majesty's jubilee, accompanied by the late Emperor Frederick and the Empress (the Princess Royal of England), when the Bishop of Derry preached the sermon. The late Duchess of Cambridge often worshipped in the chapel; and in it, during the present reign, Archbishop Tait, the Bishop of Peterborough, and other prelates, received consecration.

Several of the English nobility have of late years been married there by special license. The list includes the late Marquis of Conyngham, the Marquis of Tavistock, Lord Carrington, Lord Hastings, &c.

In design and decoration, the old Banqueting House was not well suited for a Chapel Royal; and it is no longer used for ecclesiastical purposes. In November 1890, a Gazette notice permanently closed the place for divine service; and in January 1891 the building was granted by the Queen to the Council of the Royal United Service Institution. On the 6th of June in the present year the Prince of Wales opened a fashionable bazaar in aid of this new departure, and laid the foundation stone of an extra wing designed to meet the requirements of the Institution. This extension is now well advanced, and will be completed before the end of the present year. It may be assumed that the new wing will be made as far as possible to correspond in style with the historic building which it adjoins, for that remnant is the only surviving link with the past splendours of Whitehall Palace.

THE ABSENT HEART.

By GEORGE G. FARQUHAR.

TOM OSMOND had been rejected; not, indeed, by the girl herself, but, what was likely to come to much the same thing, by the girl's father. Tom had inherited a good name, and little else, from his forebears. Add to this a good education, a smiling face, a taste, not culinary, for horse-flesh, a few odd debts in various quarters, a liberal hand—when infrequent circumstance did not stay its bounty—and there you have Tom Osmond in his means, propensities, and conditions. Mr Pentreath had put *pro* and *contra* into the scale before he issued judgment, with the result that *pro* kicked the beam viciously.

'Look here, Tom,' he had said. 'I'll speak plainly to you. Though it's her father that says it, no man breathing could wish for a prettier wife than Eva—yes, I see you admit that; and I can answer for it—here the old man slapped his trousers pocket significantly—'that she'll be a fit mate in other respects. What's more, her own ambition—no, I won't call it ambition, because there's no real ambition where there's no hill-climbing in front—but her own inclination works that way.'

'She has never given me to understand that,' interposed Tom.

'Perhaps not,' Mr Pentreath went on. 'But I've studied the child, and I see her true character

developing day by day. It's as I have said, Tom. As I've her happiness and welfare to look to, I've thought over these matters beforehand.'

'You are considerate, Mr Pentreath,' Tom said, a shade of bitterness in his tones. 'My hopes, as I now see, have been too sanguine. Although Eva and I have known each other from childhood, there has never been anything approaching love-passages between us. Yet I fancied—delusively, you say—that she did care for me. You have forced this confession from me, for of my own accord I should not—at any rate, just yet—have ventured on the subject.'

'I only wanted to warn you in time, both for your sake and for hers. I think I know you sufficiently well, Tom, to feel sure that you would not wish her to act on immature impulses. You perceive I grade you higher than I would a mere adventurer.'

'And your decision is final?' asked Tom, a slight flush overcasting his face.

'Circumstances being as they are, I am afraid I must say "Yes" to that.'

'And if circumstances altered? For instance, if I were rich instead of poor, should I then be considered worthy of her?'

'Well, then—um!' Mr Pentreath hesitated, eyeing his companion askance. 'But we'd better not consider a hypothetical case. I like you, Tom—I always did—but I've responsibilities and duties that must come before predilection—What!—are you off? I'm sorry I had to be so outspoken; but you must see it was wisest—for the best.—Good-night, Tom.'

Thus was Tom Osmond repudiated by the father before he had dared to lay bare his mind to the daughter.

The summer fast fled by; already the waning season had blotched tree and hedgerow with deeper tints. On the undulating downs above Combe Travis, frequent tussocks of long coarse grass flecked with brown patches the short, springy turf; the sweet scent of heath and wild thyme travelled on the breeze; the brake waved cool and green as ever. Gray turrets of weather-stained granite—gaunt defences—edged the downs; in their niches grew wax-like bunches of bleached and parched sea-thrift. To seaward, the lazy waters slept unruffled. The ships making for the entrance to the Sound lay becalmed, their spread sails flapping idly. Only the swift-moving steamers, trailing lengthening clouds of thick reek across the horizon, disturbed with incongruous energy the quiet and repose of the day.

Over the hillock, close under the pinnacled cliffs, stood Eva Pentreath and Tom Osmond. It was not a clandestine meeting, as Tom had not been forbidden Eva's society. Mr Pentreath's prudence and insight into human nature would not permit him to go to that extreme. No; they met as a matter of course; it was part of their existence, part of the routine of life with them. The downs had been their rendezvous in childhood; and after Tom left college, the companionship had been renewed, naturally and mutually, as though it had never been intermitted.

Neither had spoken for some time. Eva's ringing laugh and sunny glances were held in abeyance. She stood there—a slight, girlish figure—her head downbent, so that the broad-brimmed hat hid the pretty face beneath it.

Presently, she looked up. For a moment, her eyes wandered from the little town, snuggled down by the cove, to the distant Tor, and finally rested upon the chalk-white road that wound in the coast curve towards Plymouth.

'I can scarcely bring myself to believe it,' she said at length. 'Have you really made up your mind to go?'

'Yes,' replied Tom. 'I have engaged a berth on the "Mercia," which sails for Melbourne on Friday. I only regret I didn't accept my uncle's offer when it was held out to me years ago. You see, I've done no good here; and I might have settled down to work, and have been of some use out there.'

'I'm sorry, Tom,' Eva said, in low tones. 'How we shall miss you!'

'Will you miss me?' asked Tom, taken aback at his own boldness.

'Of course I shall. No more walks together; no more delightful scamperings over the moor; no more— Why, I shall be dreadfully dull without you.'

'Yes, at first, perhaps; it will be quieter—for you,' replied the young fellow, the light dying from his eyes.

'But you will come back?' Eva put in quickly.

'You are not going away for ever?'

'I hope not,' Tom said sadly. 'I may be away two years, five years, ten years; I don't know how long. But I shall come back, Eva—if there's anything to come back for.' He looked at her keenly.

She dropped her head again, fumbling with the sprig of heather in her hands; but she did not reply.

'You will have changed greatly by that time,' Tom hazarded, after the pause.

'Certainly, I shall. I shall be older, perhaps stouter, and most assuredly uglier,' Eva answered, the old smile coming into her face once more.—

'Don't contradict! You know how I detest a flatterer.—And now, I must go back home, Tom. You will call on father to-night? Then both he and I will wish you good luck and a speedy return.'

Before the week was ended, Tom Osmond had left England.

From time to time Mr Pentreath had tidings from him. Eva was always allowed to read the letters, the more readily as they contained nothing that her father cared to suppress. They dealt exclusively with Tom's goings and comings, his life and vicissitudes. We rummage through the details to pick out the material points. The new life was laborious and trying; but Tom made light of hardships; his constitution was sound and vigorous, his thwews of steel. On reaching the up-country 'station' of his relative, he had successively been herder, stockman, and shearer, taking the rough with the smooth—and precious little smooth there was, too—till, some eighteen months after his arrival in the colony, he had been promoted to the overseership. In this capacity he had practically sole control and management of the extensive 'run,' his uncle being now too old to take an active share in the concern; while his cousin—a young fellow of about Tom's own age—was physically unfitted for the more arduous duties of supervision. Tom's later letters dwelt upon the varying health

of his uncle, and hinted—hinted vaguely only—at the possibility of the ranch being handed over to the two younger men in partnership. It may as well be known in this place that Tom never became a partner.

In the meantime, one or two events which it is necessary to chronicle had come to pass in Combe Travis. In the first place, Sir Everard Malton, having taken a lease of Combe Park, had moved into residence there; in the next place, he and Mr Pentreath became close cronies; and in the third place, Sir Everard's son, Harold, bade fair to fill up the hiatus in Eva's content caused by Tom Osmond's departure. Before Harold Malton came, Eva was just about sick of Combe Travis—sick and bored. But now her megrims fled; her vivacity and spirits returned with something of their old abandon. The mad races over the downs, the moorland walks, the fishing and shooting excursions, were again to the fore, Harold as trusty escort.

Mr Pentreath was content to let things slide; no need to spur a willing horse. Noting with approval, he remained passive. But observant as he was, one little incident never came within his ken. It occurred after one of the aforesaid gallops. For the last half-hour Eva had felt that the avowal was in the air; with diplomatic adroitness she had so far staved it off. While riding along the narrow, high-banked lane that led homeward, however, Harold leaned over his saddle and spoke. In a jumble of words he blurted it all out.

'Harold,' Eva replied softly, 'you must have understood that I did not want you to say that.'

'But you will give me an answer?' he rejoined anxiously. 'Is there any reason why I should not have?'

'There is a reason,' Eva interrupted. 'I will tell it you when the horses are stabled. Please, do not say anything more now.'

They rode the rest of the way in strained silence.

'Now,' Eva said, when the horses were given into the groom's charge, 'will you come with me?'

She went into the house and up the stairs. Harold followed, wondering. Stopping at one of the doors, she opened it and passed in.

'This is my sanctum—my boudoir, museum, and library, all in one.—Yes,' as Harold hesitated on the threshold—'yes, you may come in.'

The room was attractively furnished and decorated. In one corner stood an open bookcase, crammed with daintily bound volumes; and on the opposite side of the window a buhl table was covered with knick-knacks and curios that had been picked up abroad. Raised above these gewgaws, in the middle of the table, a frame of silver filigree-work held a small photograph.

Harold waited for Eva to speak again. At length she turned round, her slight figure in its well-fitting riding habit showing darkly against the window. He could not see her face distinctly.

'I did not know how else to tell you,' she said quickly. 'It is a confidence that I cannot—I dare not—put into words. But I can trust it to your keeping.' Pointing to the photograph, she added: 'That is Tom—Mr Osmond.'

Harold walked over and inspected the likeness. 'I understand now,' he said. 'I feared this.

Once or twice I have heard Mr Osmond's name coupled with yours; but your father assured me that the rumour was without foundation. Now I understand that even Mr Pentreath does not know the truth.'

'And you do not think me unfeeling—heartless?'

'Not wittingly. I myself am solely to blame. I have been mistaken; and I will respect your secret. It is safe with me as long as it pleases you to make a secret of it.'

'We can still be good friends, Harold?'

'I hope we always shall be,' Harold rejoined. 'I beg your pardon, Eva, for what I have said, and I pledge myself not to repeat an offence that pains and grieves you.'

'Thank you, Harold. You did not know.'

To outward seeming, their intimacy continued as heretofore; but essentially there was a difference. Neither of them could well have said in what the difference consisted. Maybe a shadow fallen between them—impalpable, yet ever-present—seemed to necessitate a cold, studied courtesy on Harold's part; and on Eva's, a wary restraint, which her father construed in his own way. Maybe it was a shadow; maybe 'twasn't.

Sir Everard and his son were dining at Mr Pentreath's one evening, when the two older men became engaged in a discussion which monopolised the whole of their attention. Harold contented himself with listening; Eva, sitting opposite him, had been strangely silent all through the dinner. Happening to glance towards her, Harold saw that her eyes were fixed upon him. She dropped her gaze, a vivid flush burning her cheeks, and tried to cover her confusion by asking some trivial question. He replied in a matter-of-fact way that belied the tremulous beating of his heart.

In the drawing-room the debate waxed hotter, and to settle a disputed point it became necessary to refer to a book in the library. Harold volunteered to fetch the volume. On his way down-stairs he passed Eva's boudoir, the door of which was half open. There was a light inside. Stealthily, as if he were in the act of committing a heinous crime—as indeed he was—Harold peered in. He started violently. Then, marching boldly forward, he strode up to the burl table. Tom Osmond's portrait was gone. In its stead, that of Harold himself stared out from the frame of Indian metal-work.

'My promise!' he ejaculated. 'Never to speak of that again so long as it annoys or pains her. So long! Does she not now absolve me? Would it pain her now?'

Nearly three years had gone since Tom Osmond left England, and three more months passed before his last letter reached Mr Pentreath. That gentleman read the missive from end to end in his usual thorough and methodical fashion. This done, he leaned back and ruminated.

'Uncle and cousin both dead! Tom heir to his relative's wealth and property—a quarter of a million, I've been told. A tidy sum—a tidy sum. Tom's a lucky fellow. I'm glad for the lad's sake; I always did like Tom.—But how's this he finishes his letter?—"I have almost completed the arrangement of my uncle's affairs, and I have already engaged a passage for Plymouth by the

'Vulcan.' Again I will ask you a certain question. What will be your answer?" Umph—umph! Perhaps I'd better not let Eva read this. Ah, well, well.'

Eva never did read that letter, for there and then her father tore it up and flung the shreds upon the fire.

The 'Vulcan' steamed slowly up the Sound, past the breakwater. Her passengers, thronging the deck, hungered to get ashore and greet their friends. Apart from the rest stood Tom Osmond, bronze-visaged, the lines around his mouth deeper, and perhaps harsher, but otherwise little altered from the Tom Osmond of bygone days.

'I wonder if they'll be here to meet me?' he thought.—'No; that's expecting rather too much. Still, they might; I hope she will. How she would have teased if she could but have seen me in my beard. Ha, ha! However, that's gone, and I flatter myself I look something like a civilised being again.—Why, there she is at the end of the quay! I'll swear that's her blue dress, and—Pshaw! What am I thinking about? She'll have cast that aside years ago.—No; that's not Eva.'

Neither that nor any other. Tom landed amid a crowd of hustling strangers. Not a friend to meet him. He knew not one, nor was he known by any. Stay; there was one who recognised him; it was old Bilstow, Mr Pentreath's gardener.

'If you bain't Mr Tom, I'm grievous mistook,' he said.

'Why, Bilstow,' cried Tom, 'how are you, and how are they all at Combe Travis?'

'Oh, main gay an' spruce, Mr Tom. I've just come fro' the weddin'—a fine un too—up at St Andrew's.'

'The wedding?'

'Ay; Sir Everard's son, Harold, an' Miss Eva. They've just gone to the station. They're a-goin' to spend the honeymoon in Wales som'eres.—Hear that whistle? That's their train, I'll be boun'. A bonnie couple they looked an' all.—Ay, but everybody'll be glad to see you again, Mr Tom.'

Tom felt a choking sensation at his throat; his heart sank. And this was his welcome home.

OYSTER-CULTURE IN FRANCE.

ARCACHON, in the department of the Gironde, is a favourite summer watering-place for the Bordelais, and a winter health resort for the whole of France. But apart altogether from its reputation as a health resort, it is famous for the supply of oysters which it yields to France and to the world. The oyster industry of France is the largest of its kind in Europe, and at Arcachon it is carried on in the most scientific and systematic manner. It was about the middle of the present century that the work of oyster-rearing was commenced here, a work which to-day gives employment to thousands of people, men and women, in the villages which surround the Bassin. The Bassin of Arcachon, with a circumference of about sixty miles, from its physical formation is peculiarly favourable to the rearing of the oyster, being a bay completely protected from the storms

of the ocean by a natural breakwater of sandhills, some of the highest dunes in the world. Were the entrance from the Bay of Biscay a deep and navigable channel instead of being, as it is, dotted with shifting sandbanks, the Bassin would form a perfect natural harbour. At low-water it will be found to be covered to a large extent by sandbanks, separated by numerous and deep channels; and it is on these sandbanks, called *crassats*, that the oyster parks are formed in a manner we shall endeavour to describe.

The site of a park having been determined upon, it is divided into rectangular portions which measure forty yards by thirty, and which are called *claires*. These are separated from each other by dykes of clay a foot in height by two feet broad, strengthened by planks resting on piquets firmly fixed in the sand. Around a group of *claires* runs what is called a *blindage*, a netting of galvanised iron wire, as a protection to the oyster against its numerous enemies, among which the crab is chief; but whelks, starfishes, and boring sponges are dangerous. Many oyster-rearers from reasons of economy form a *blindage* of the branches of a tall and strong heather which grows abundantly in the neighbouring forest. In addition to the protection from the attacks of ravenous fishes afforded by these two systems, they also serve to retain the oysters within their limits, and prevent their being carried by seaweed or other cause from one man's park to that of his neighbour. Another plan often adopted to ensure further protection to the precious mollusc consists in the formation around the *claires* of a line of *pignons* or young pine-trees, stripped of their branches with the exception of a plume at the top. The *pignons* are three yards in height, and at high-water, with their waving plumes, act as a sort of scarecrow, or, under the circumstances, as a sort of scarecrab.

The formation of the *claires* being completed, near them are deposited several wooden frames, like cages, to hold layers of tiles of a length of eighteen inches, the frames themselves measuring two yards long by two feet broad and one yard in height. The tiles have convex and concave sides, and are at first whitened in a bath of chalk and water mixed with a little fine sand; and after being well dried in the sun, they are laid in the frames, each of which holds eight or ten rows. Here they become covered by young oysters to the number of two or three hundred per tile. This takes place during the months of May and June, for it is in May that the spawn appear in the oyster as a liquid substance of milky appearance, and render it uneatable until the month of September. This fact gives rise to the saying, that oysters should be eaten only in those months whose names contain the letter *r*.

The tiles are left thus to be washed by the tides until October, when they are removed for the delicate process of *detroquage*, a process consisting in removing each oyster from the tile in such a manner as to leave a thin and small fragment of chalk adhering to each shell. It is performed by young women, who use a knife specially manufactured for the purpose, and requires the greatest care in execution, in order that the young and fragile oyster may not be destroyed. Those surviving this operation are next passed through two riddles, the meshes of

which vary in diameter, and being thus assorted according to size, are placed in cases called *ambulances*, frames of wood two yards by one, covered with a netting of tarred wire, to permit the free circulation of the water. These *ambulances* are firmly fixed in the sand at the park by means of well-driven piquets, and are the invention of a local culturist. In the *ambulance*, an oyster will rapidly increase in size, and attain in a few months a diameter of one or two inches. At low-water the *ambulances* with their contents receive a good watering at the hands of the *parqueurs*, and this in addition to the covering by the tides twice daily in the natural course. After a sojourn in the *ambulance* for some months, until sufficiently strong for the purpose, the oysters are scattered abroad like seed in the open *claire*, where they assume a flat form, and lie for several months until the harvest.

In order to watch the progress of much of the work before described, it is by no means necessary to cross the channel to the oyster parks lying in the centre of the Bassin. The *plage* or beach at Arcachon, La Teste, and the numerous villages on the bay, is at all times dotted with the *parqueurs*, busy in the various departments of their profession. Here is a group of men and women sorting the edible oysters just brought ashore into various sizes and prices; there, another group at work, cleaning and scraping or whitening the tiles, or detaching therefrom the young shellfish, each operation in its own season. There is no mistaking 'Madame la Parquense,' dressed as she is in her red flannel knickerbockers and long boots, sometimes with legs bare, and feet in large wooden sandals for more convenient walking on the sand. The men are, as a rule, dressed in suits of blue cotton, with scarlet sash, and head covered with the popular blue *béret*. The *plage*, too, is covered with the various implements of the fishery. Piles of tiles are everywhere to be seen; *ambulances*, broken and waiting repair; groups of miscellaneous articles, as baskets, rakes, spades, wheelbarrows, and wire; bundles of *pignons* and stacks of heather, ready for transportation to the park itself.

But it is necessary to take a boat and engage a man as guide, in order to see many of the most interesting scenes connected with the industry, among them being the gathering of the edible oyster, which is judged eatable by its size, nothing under an inch and a half in diameter being allowed to be sold. This harvest takes place every day except during that period from May to September when the fish are uneatable for the reasons already mentioned. A practice fatal to oyster-culture, and one which almost always results in the destruction of beds by over-fishing, and the removal of the breeding oyster—namely, the use of the dredge in fishing—is here unknown; and that its use at Arcachon is unnecessary is one chief cause of the success with which the culture is carried on, and the dimensions to which the industry has grown. Low tide is of course the time for fishing, for then the sea recedes from the *claires*, leaving only sufficient water to cover the oysters. The method of procedure is for a number of men and women to form a line at one end of a *claire*, and work slowly to the other, each carrying a rake, which

reveals the sand-covered oyster, and a wire-basket to hold the proceeds of the fishery. On the completion of one claire, another is commenced. At the end of a day's work, when the incoming tide will permit its continuance no longer, the results are carried ashore, and either deposited in the floating warehouses anchored near the beach, or transported by steamboat or railway to their ultimate destination. A large quantity of the finest oysters are transferred to beds in other places, to be fattened, as this process cannot be brought to perfection in the locality.

A strict watch is kept by day and night over the parks, so that no amateur may try his hand at oyster-gathering. For this purpose are the numbers of houseboats which are to be seen dotting the bay, their white roofs shining in the sun. These contain bed and board for the guardians of the parks. On the 'Ile des Oiseaux,' in the centre of the Bassin, are cabins for the same purpose.

Though hardly the place for a successful pearl-fishery, pearls have been found in Arcachon on rare occasions. The local museum contains as a curiosity three found together in one shell some years ago. The only other occasion we know of was quite lately, when the writer himself was the lucky finder.

Great as is the number of oysters exported from Arcachon annually, it is estimated at not more than two per cent. of those born; and this is comparatively a very large proportion, due to the elaborate manner in which the industry is carried on. It has been estimated that for every oyster brought ashore from the natural beds of Germany, more than one million die. The number to which a mother-oyster gives birth is so large as to be almost incredible, and of these only a very small proportion find their way to the chalk-covered tiles placed for their reception. Many of course are destroyed in the numerous processes through which they pass during the three or four years necessary for such perfection as is attainable in the locality.

Altogether, it is an interesting industry, and one in which the picturesque abounds. A pretty sight, the return of the boats on a full tide, after a day's work, when the many sails, white and terra cotta, dot the clear blue water under a clear blue sky, with a gray line on the horizon, the distant, pine-covered sandhills.

THE 'AWETO.'

THE Rev. C. Parish, Taunton, favours us with the following note on the above:

In an interesting article on 'Some New Zealand Peculiarities' in *Chambers's Journal* for the month of September, the writer mentions, as perhaps the most remarkable of them all, an object called by the Maoris 'aweto,' of which he says 'one is uncertain whether to call it an animal or a plant.' Perhaps the following explanation of this phenomenon may be welcome to some of the many readers of the *Journal*.

The strange object—and very strange it undoubtedly is—has been long known. It is a fungus—named 'Sphaeria Robertii'—which fastens on and grows out of the dead body of a caterpillar, which caterpillar retains its form in a

dried state at the base of the vegetable growth. It is well known that many caterpillars, notably that of the Gooseberry Sawfly, after feeding on the leaves of the plant they affect, drop on to the ground, and, there burying themselves, turn into the pupa or chrysalis stage, out of which, if no misfortune happen to them, the moth, or butterfly, or winged insect, be it what it may, emerges in due season, to recommence its cycle of depredation. The caterpillar in question, which undergoes the remarkable and unusual transformation mentioned by the writer of the article, is that of a New Zealand moth, 'Hepialus virescens'; and it feeds on the leaves of the 'rata' tree ('*Metrosideros robusta*'), which is correctly described as 'a kind of flowering myrtle,' for the tree belongs to the natural order Myrtaceae. When the caterpillar falls to the ground and buries itself, there fasten on to it what, for simplicity's sake, we may call the seeds of the fungus; and finding in its body a suitable nidus—as, once more, the writer correctly supposes—they permeate its substance, killing the unfortunate caterpillar in the process, and ultimately growing out of it into the fully developed 'plant,' eight to ten inches in height. But although this takes place at the cost of the caterpillar's life, the outward form of the caterpillar is preserved in desiccated and hardened condition. A draught of this singular production may be seen in Lindley's 'Vegetable Kingdom,' where he treats of the Fungal Alliance.

As for the difficulty of understanding how this species is propagated, there really is none. It is to be presumed that only a certain proportion of these buried caterpillars meet with this strange fate, and that at least a sufficient number remain unattacked by the fungus parasite, and, in the regular course of nature, become moths and reproduce their kind. It is not only in New Zealand that a fungus plays this part; in England also a species of the same genus is found, 'Sphaeria entomothiza,' though it is extremely rare, which, as its name implies, is parasitic on animal life, being found on dead larvae and pupae of insects.

Another species, if really another ('Sphaeria sinensis'), is sold in China, tied up in small bundles, being esteemed for its supposed medicinal properties.

SONNET.

I GRIEVE beside thee; yet I would not weep
So loudly that I might disturb thy rest;
I would not stir the silence of thy breast,
Nor break with distant dreams thy quiet sleep.
I would not any thought of me should creep
About thy heart to hurt thee—Pain so pressed
Upon thee, that I whisper: 'This is best,
So tranquil lying after anguish deep.'
Yet I have loved thee well—and Life grows drear
And dark for me, who hold my sobbing breath,
That so I break not on thy slumber, dear;
Heart-sick by thee, my love yet lingereth,
Careful upon thy brow to drop no tear,
Lest I should draw thee from the peace of Death.

MYRA.

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THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

WHERE is it? From a pleasantly placed window in an upper storey you can look across to the Queen's London residence, Buckingham Palace. Eleven months of the year its white blinds are drawn and the standard staff is flagless. Between lies the lovely lake in the park of St James's, teeming with tribes of fancy ducks, the rarest of them originally put there by Charles the Martyr—ducks of strangely varied plumage, flying ducks, and ducks that dive deep down for two or three minutes at a time. The children are watching these aquatic capers, and throwing morsels of bread and cake to their feathered playfellows. Then the bell on the little island rings—the ducks' dinner bell—and there is a quacking race with web and with wing for the feeding-ground. A gentle breeze stirs the foliage of a thin forest, some of whose trees watched the first Charles walk to his doom in Whitehall here. And there are flower-beds ablaze with the season's blooms, and the gardeners are sweeping the walks and mowing the grass. And the sheep are browsing on the green, undisturbed by here and there a tired workman, who makes his mid-day couch among them for a brief rest. Above the red and venerable bricks of St James's Palace and Marlborough House is fashionable Piccadilly, with the towers and turrets of its Clubs and town-houses. Then house-tops and spires and domes on every hand; and far away the hazy hills of Hampstead Heath and Harrow—one of the finest views of the vastness of regal London. We are here on the pivot of the Empire, and grouped around are the hoary buildings of the Admiralty, the Horse Guards, the Treasury, the Privy-council, ending in the straggling and sternly unadorned residence of the First Minister of the Crown. A wide survey that recalls echoes of the past, and cannot fail to impress the emissaries of foreign potentates who come to discuss the affairs of nations.

As for the business of the Foreign Office, it is peculiarly different from that of other departments of Government, as it is mainly occupied

with questions of State, and not with the affairs of individuals. From such a statement it might be supposed that all the Foreign Secretary does is to make himself all roundly agreeable in good French. But that is the mere playtime of his post; and his five thousand pounds a year is not a great lure for a wealthy Marquis or Earl to devote himself to a duty which compels him to scorn delights and live laborious days. We propose to show that any such popular theory of the Minister's leisure is wrong as wrong can be.

The office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was instituted in 1782. It has always been held by some hereditary peer, with two notable exceptions—Fox in three governments, and Canning in two. It is an office of titles and orders, on the principle that its functionaries may stand on equal titular terms with the Counts and Pachas and Señors who come to us. It is always Sir Somebody Something that is selected to answer for our foreign policy in the people's chamber of our legislature. But to the business of the office. It would not be inappropriate to describe the Foreign Office as the biggest newspaper office in the world, albeit its ways are not the common hazards of journalism. It is often slow, generally sure, certainly cautious, calm, and deliberate. For so prosaic an institution to have a motto is strangely surprising; yet, as a ribbon to the dome that overhangs the grand and gilded staircase, there runs round this legend: 'Let the people praise Thee, O God; yea, let all the people praise Thee; for Thou shalt judge the folk righteously, and govern the nations upon the earth.' Above this stand figures symbolically representing all the tribes remote or near with whom we have diplomatic dealings. These nations we in our own way have classified as First, Second, Third, &c., rate 'Powers;' and according to these classes are fixed the rank and the styles of our State representatives. The first-class powers are France, Russia, Turkey, Austria, Germany, Italy, and Spain. To these we send Ambassadors Extraordinary. We have not yet honoured the United States of America with one

of these highest dignitaries of State. The salaries paid to these ambassadors are as follows: Austria, £8000; France, £9000; Germany, £7500; Italy, £7000; Russia, £7800; Spain, £5500; Turkey, £8000. In addition to these salaries, the ambassadors have practically small palaces to live in; and they are also allowed special funds for the purpose of entertaining the dignitaries and the officials of the various Governments to which they are accredited.

To the powers of second rank we send Envoys Extraordinary, in number seventeen. Minor states have Ministers Resident; and the complement of the Diplomatic Service is made up of *Chargés d'Affaires*, Secretaries of Embassy or of Legation or of other grades, and *Attachés*. In all they come to one hundred and fifty.

Then come the Consular Corps. In importance of rank they are arranged thus: Agents-general, Consuls-general, Consuls, Vice-consuls, Consular Agents, and Proconsuls. All told they come to about nine hundred. The methods of the Celestial and Oriental nations call for special treatment, and so to China, Japan, &c., we send about a hundred more representatives. The rear rank of our Foreign civil army is composed of a few half-dozen Chaplains.

To look at the work done by both branches of this foreign service. The diplomatic body are engaged on purely 'State' matters. The Ambassador or Minister goes direct to the Government of the country where he is, with reference to any matter which the Foreign Office asks him to investigate or to arrange. In these official communications there is a very strict etiquette preserved; only those of correspondingly equal rank may address each other in correspondence. Bearing out the old maxim of '*littera scripta manet*,' no agreement or proposal is considered definite or conclusive until it is reduced to writing. It is a fixed rule of our Foreign Office that every document, down to the merest scrap of paper, shall be carefully preserved. The head of what is called the Librarian's Department is officially described as the Keeper of the State Papers. These papers are all sorted, '*précis-ed*,' indexed, and catalogued in such a way that at even a few minutes' notice any precedent or fact may be easily fingered. The last resting-place of the State Papers is the Record Office, and it is there that the writers of history go for first-hand authentic information. As has been said, there are two branches of our foreign civil service—the Diplomatic and the Consular. The members of a legation are engaged in sending home reports of the action of foreign parliaments, conversations with their colleagues of other nations, public opinion on various questions as exhibited in the country's press, the state of trade and commerce, and so on—in short, writing intelligently the history of each week and year.

The Consular officers have to deal with more limited spheres; but each one has to send home a strict account of his doings—whatever he has had to do with British seamen and shipmasters, the relieving of the unfortunate emigrants from his own country, local topics, the statistics of the trade of his district, and anything and everything that he may in his judgment deem to be of interest or importance.

A simple addition sum shows that we have

nearly twelve hundred correspondents all over the world in direct or indirect communication with the Foreign Office. Their despatches we shall speak of presently. The 'staff' required to deal with these is generally about one hundred and fifty. Ten special foreign service messengers are engaged in taking to and fro special despatches from various courts, and their business is no light work. A good story is told of one of these who had gone for a holiday to the Riviera. He received from London the following telegram: 'You are fast and dirty; return at once.—SALISBURY.' Full of wonder, he repaired home to find that the telegraph should have told him that he was 'first on duty.' Official caligraphy must be held responsible for the libel.

It needs very little reflection to calculate what a mass of correspondence has to be dealt with here. It is no unusual thing for an ambassador to send home a thousand despatches in a year. Some of these often run to fifteen or twenty foolscap pages. As definite figures can be made to do anything, perhaps it will be better to leave the multiplication to the imagination of the reader.

Despatches of special secrecy or confidence are always sent by a special messenger, or written in cipher. The handbooks of private cipher are constantly being compiled anew. To give a specimen of a cipher despatch: it would convey little to any one not possessed of the key to receive an instruction running, 00,100, 34,346, 07,084, 55,528, and so on. Or this: 'Chessboard, potato, elegant, donum, pert, sacrilege, merciless, toga.' Yet each of these words is a sentence in itself.

On the receipt of the despatches at the Foreign Office, it is the business of the resident clerks to sort them out and to send them to the different departments. In the distribution of business we find such headings as Political, Consular, Treaty, Commercial, Sanitary, &c. Each despatch bears on its back the evidence of its history—its date of sending and of arriving, a '*précis*' of its contents, the successive suggestions of those through whose hands it passes, and lastly, the red ink '*fiat*' initial of the Secretary of State. From each of the superintending secretaries of departments are sent every day to the Secretary, wherever he may be, despatch boxes with different coloured slips of paper—white, green, or red—according to the urgency of their contents. Every single one of these comes under the personal scrutiny of the Minister. The would-be historian who haunts the Record Office will not find one that has not the initial of a Wellington, a Clarendon, a Salisbury, or a Granville. To read and to know the letters of a thousand correspondents is in itself no easy undertaking. But there is more than this. Imagine the burden of communication with the Ministers of other countries, and with the different departments of Government here—Home, Colonial, War, Treasury, &c. The foreign ambassadors come and go incessantly—Frenchman and Dutchman, Swede and Spaniard, Turk and Tartar.

The last branch of the Secretary's occupation is to attend to the petty pester of all sorts and conditions of people at home. One wants to know the state of the law on a special point in some foreign country. Another would like

inquiries made about the will or estate of some alleged relative who is supposed to have died somewhere. A third has a claim against a foreign country for the modest amount of a million sterling, and wants it collected at once. To each of these correspondents the reply courteous must be returned. All this literature is styled 'Domestic—Various.' It is painfully domestic, and charmingly various.

We have endeavoured to give some small idea of the work of our Foreign Secretary. The man who fills the post must be unusually careful, tactful, active, and alert. And withal he may fitly be described as the Atlas of the British Empire. Perhaps that simile may furnish an apology ample enough for his sometimes slow steps. At any rate his seat in the British Cabinet is the least easy-chair of all.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XVI.

Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss.

SHAKESPEARE.

A FEW days after this, Lady Lester's carriage was making its way through the crowded thoroughfares of the City towards Dalston.

Pomona had received all the information Mr Freestone could furnish her with, which was meagre enough. Miss Lester had married a Dr Merridew, who lived then, and, according to the Directory, lived still at 37 John Street, Dalston. The old lawyer told Pomona how greatly incensed the family had been at the marriage. Sir Hugh had come into the title ten years before, and the Dowager Lady Lester lived in the dower-house with this one surviving daughter, who was a good many years younger than Sir Hugh.

Lady Lester made a great deal of this daughter, and spoilt her, I fancy; and from all I heard, I believe she was a wilful, headstrong, young lady, who had never been crossed in her life about anything; and when she took it into her head to marry the young doctor, nothing on earth would turn her from it. Sir Hugh stormed, and the Dowager coaxed; and I was even called in to reason; but I never in all my experience knew storming or coaxing, much less reasoning, turn a woman's mind one hair's-breadth to right or left—if you'll excuse me saying so, Miss Lester. I think the Dowager Lady Lester would soon have made up her mind to the inevitable if she had lived; but, poor lady, she caught a cold on her journey from Paris, and died after a few days' illness; and this increased Sir Hugh's resentment against his sister, as he considered—and perhaps rightly—that his mother's death had been hastened by trouble of mind and worry. And then, a few months later, we heard of Mrs Merridew's death; and not long afterwards came that terrible railway accident in which the two boys lost their lives; and the next year Sir Hugh followed them. He never got over the awful shock of their loss. They all of them went within eighteen months, the Dowager, her daughter, and Sir Hugh and his two boys.—Dear!

dear! the ways of Providence are very mysterious! And the old lawyer shook his head gloomily; and Pomona sighed, with the very mitigated sorrow one feels for long past troubles.

'My mother says she is afraid they are not very well off.'

The lawyer smiled. 'A doctor in Dalston is not generally very wealthy.'

'Have they ever asked for assistance?'

'Never through me; and I do not fancy directly to her ladyship; so I conclude they have never been in great distress.—But I recollect hearing at the time that the doctor was an independent, high-spirited, young fellow—not at all the sort to come sponging on his wife's relations.'

'I wonder what the daughter will be like?'

'Would you like me to go and find out?'

'No. Lady Lester wants me to go; and I feel so curious about it myself. You see, she must be just my age; and, of course, being first-cousins, we may be very much alike.'

'I hope she may be, my dear.' The old lawyer looked with kindly, fatherly eyes on the bright, lovely face opposite him in his dusty, old office. It was not often that anything so fair to look upon sat in that worn leather chair, with the background of dull law-books setting off her fresh beauty. 'But you must not be disappointed if you find something very different. Of course, she has been very differently brought up from yourself. I daresay her father has not been able to afford much of an education; and, of course, she has never been into any society.'

Lawyers are not as a rule imaginative; but before Mr Freestone's mind's eye arose the vision of a common-looking, ill-bred girl, dressed with shabby smartness, with uncouth or vulgarly pretentious manners.

'If you will take my advice,' he said, 'you will be a little careful how you encourage anything like intimacy. People of this sort are sometimes rather awkward to keep in their place.'

She looked up at him with a little surprise in her clear eyes. 'You see,' she said, 'she is my cousin. There is no one so near me except my mother.'

Her heart was very full of the story as she drove away from Lincoln's Inn, trying to put herself in the place of that young, self-willed aunt, dead these twenty years, who had left everything for the man she loved. Pomona had read plenty of love stories; but there was a reality about this that brought it home to her, and set her wondering whether there would ever be any man in the world who would have any power over her to compare for a moment with the least feeble movement of her mother's hand. 'I don't believe,' she told herself, 'that if I loved a man with all the concentrated love extracted out of all the three-volume novels at Mudie's, with a dozen poets thrown in, and were married to him twenty times over, that, if my mother whispered, I could help going bundling home again.—She was an only daughter, too! How could she have done it? But I don't think other girls love their mother as I do mine, and I expect that is why I never seem to care about men, as other girls do.'

But here the carriage stopped, and the footman,

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coming to the door, announced that this was the address given.

'I don't think this can be right, William,' Pomona said, looking doubtfully at the shabby little house. Sage's home did not present itself so favourably to Pomona's first gaze as it had done to Maurice's. There was no charitable fall of snow to throw its kindly mantle over defects. Next door, the dust-bin was being emptied, and a very grimy man, with a basket full of ill-smelling rubbish on his shoulder, stood on the area steps gazing at the elegant carriage drawn up just behind his cart. 'This is John Street, Dalston, Miss.—Ain't it, Thomas?' the man answered, appealing to the coachman, who, perhaps, might have more acquaintance with the low parts of London than he possessed himself. The coachman having corroborated the fact by a sideways nod, William went on: 'And this is No. 37, Miss. Shall I knock?'

She bade the man knock; and when Sarah opened the door—and again Providence had not been kind in the matter of dirty aprons and gaping seams—she herself asked if Miss Merridew were at home.

Sarah was so appalled by the grandeur of the carriage and the height of the flunkey towering above her on the door-step, that the question had to be repeated before she could close her mouth gaping with amazement, to answer that she did not know, but would go and see. And then, remembering her manners, she requested the lady to step in, and ushered her into the sitting-room, where the fumes of Irish stew lingered powerfully, and where Sage's work-basket, heaped high with stockings for darning, was the only ornament on the table.

'Miss Sage'll be up-stairs,' Sarah said, lingering for another stare at the elegant dress and gracious face.

'She might abeen the Princess of Wales and all the Royal Family to look at her, and you wouldn't never ab'lieved as she wasn't a Duchess at the very least, or an Honourable, or something fine,' Sarah described to the woman at the green-grocer's round the corner, who was her special crony. 'And would you b'lieve it; she were only just plain Miss, same as you and me, for she says, "It's Miss Merridew I want. Will you tell her Miss Lester is here?"'

Sage had been a little out of tune all day. She was somehow more inclined to these moods nowadays, than in the old serene days before she had tasted of the cup of happiness. She could not account for this at all herself; and she took herself to task very severely for selfishness and ingratitude, for was she not the happiest, luckiest girl in all the world, and Maurice the most ideal lover girl ever had?

This morning had brought her a great disappointment, though she protested bravely to her father that it was not so, and that she was very glad to stop at home. Owen Ludlow was coming back to-day from Scar, and Maurice had promised to come and fetch her that afternoon and take her up to Regent's Park to tea. And now, some other engagement had turned up that would take him out of town for several days. An old uncle of his in Sussex had asked his assistance over some business with which he was occupied; and as this uncle was well off and had no family,

it might be of advantage to stand well with him. Maurice said he felt it was quite a duty to go; he could not afford to lose any chance, now that he had his little lady-love's future to think of as well as his own.

But in spite of her declaration, Dr Merridew was not quite convinced; and although she was unusually cheerful over breakfast, he fidgeted about before starting on his rounds, as if he had something on his mind. 'Look here, Sage,' he said at last: 'if I look sharp and get my visiting done, I don't see why I couldn't get an hour or so free this afternoon to go with you up to Ludlow's. It seems a pity you should be disappointed.'

'Disappointed?—you dear, old goose, disappointed? I'm not a bit. I'd a great deal rather stop at home. I've heaps to do; and it was really quite a worry to think how I could get it all done if I went off this afternoon. And besides, don't you see? if I'd set my heart on going as much as you fancy, I could take Kitty, who'd be only too pleased, and needn't drag you all the way.—But it *was* good of you to think of it—only, you see, I don't really care to go.'

'With any one else,' Dr Merridew said to himself, with a little sore feeling at the heart.—'Well, well! fathers don't count for much when lovers come on the scene.'

And Sage, when he was gone, to prove conclusively that she was not a bit disappointed, leaned her head on her hands and sobbed. Then, with that perverse tendency many have to make matters worse, and if one thing happens to upset one's peace of mind, to upset everything else, and be thoroughly miserable while we are about it, Sage filled up the day with all the most distasteful occupations ingenuity could devise—unpleasant works of supererogation in the matter of turning out cupboards and tidying remote corners; and was just drearily washing her hands preparatory to a long afternoon of darning, when Sarah came up to announce that a young lady was in the parlour 'as come in a beautiful carriage and pair; and ain't you better put on your new dress as is hanging in the cupboard in master's room, and only wish as I'd had a moment to clean myself,' Sarah said, all in one snoring breath, regretfully contemplating the state of her apron; 'and my gound all bust out under the arms, too; but I was took all of a hop, and didn't know but what it was the rates as comes that imperent with a double knock.'

'What name did she say, Sarah?'

'I think it were Miss Lester; but I ain't sure, being in a flurry like.'

Who could it be? One of Maurice's fashionable friends come to look her over and criticise her? A sudden fit of shyness and shrinking came over her. Why should she go down? In fashionable circles she knew they thought nothing of saying 'Not at home,' not reckoning it a lie because it was so generally done. Why should she not do the same, and send Sarah down with such a message? Even in her embarrassment, she laughed at the idea of Sarah's amazement at being told to do such a thing, and the way in which she would execute such an order.

Miss Lester? She seemed to recall the name; but once or twice, when Maurice had described parties he had been at and people he had met,

she had been a little stiff and indifferent, and Maurice had dropped the subject. She wished now that she had been more sympathetic and interested. It would be so stupid if this were one of Maurice's friends, and she knew nothing of her, not even her name!

All these reflections flashed through Sage's mind as she went down-stairs, not having, as Sarah suggested, made any change in her dress, not even taking off the uncompromising apron which she had assumed preparatory to her mending labours.

Pomona was standing with her back to the window, and perhaps it was this and the shyness that prevented Sage from looking calmly at her visitor, and so kept her from seeing the likeness to the picture which had struck Maurice and so many others. She was only conscious of a very tall and elegant girl, beside whom she felt small and shabby and ill at ease; and who, in return for her somewhat formal, little bow, came towards her, holding out both hands, and saying, 'It seems so very stiff to call you Miss Merridew, as we are cousins; but, do you know? I don't even know your Christian name.'

'Cousins?' Even now Sage had a dim idea that this was some relation of Maurice's treating her as kin already, by virtue of her engagement to him.

'Yes; we are cousins. My father and your mother were brother and sister.—May I kiss you, dear?' And Pomona bent and kissed Sage's cheek. 'I am Mona Lester.'

And then Sage looked up into the bright, beautiful face bending over her. 'Pomona!' she said.

'Yes, dear, Pomona.—Ah, you knew my name, though I do not know yours; but you must tell me.—Sage, is it? What a pretty name! But, Sage, you look quite startled, and no wonder, with me pouncing down on you all of a sudden. Are you always such a pale, little cousin? Do you mind my looking at you? Do you know you are ever so much more like the Lesters than I am? There are several of the portraits at Beechfield very like you, and your face seems quite familiar to me.'

'But—Pomona!—'

'Yes, call me so, if you like it. But I am always called Mona at home. Pomona is such a queer name—not pretty and quaint, like Sage.'

'But the picture?'

'Oh, have you seen it? Isn't it a very curious thing there should be such a likeness? And they say the painter painted it from the memory of his dead wife.'

'It was the picture I meant when I said your name.'

'Was it? That was curious! Then you had not heard of me any more than I had of you?'

'No. I remember once father saying there was a cousin I had never seen. The others have cousins.'

'The others?'

'Yes; didn't you know that father married again. There are Kitty and Nigel and Dennis and Will.'

'Oh, Sage, isn't it odd that you and I should have to tell one another all our history, just like strangers? But I don't feel like a stranger. I

have seen your eyes looking at me from a portrait of some Lady Lester in Charles II.'s time, ever since I was a little child.'

'And I knew your face quite well too, from the picture.'

'Have you seen it often, then?'

'Oh yes. Mr Ludlow is a friend of mine, and he painted me and Kitty in it.'

'Oh, Sage, how very extraordinary!—Yes, of course, that is partly how I know your face, though it is also from the Lester portraits. It really is a succession of the most wonderful coincidences—that I should have been painted without the artist seeing me, and under my very own name, and that my cousin should be painted in the same picture.'

'Do you know,' Sage said—she was recovering a little from the bewilderment into which Pomona's coming had thrown her—'do you know I was going this very afternoon to see Mr Ludlow? He has been away from London, and comes back to-day; and I was to have gone to tea with him, only the—the friend I was going with could not go.'

At Mrs Coppleston's dinner party Maurice Moore had told Pomona that he knew Sage a little, and now Sage avoided mentioning his name. Well, well! it is no use going back on every lightly spoken word, and tracing to it the first hairbreadth deviation that ultimately alters the whole course of life. How should we ever dare to speak if we could calculate all the widespread effect each word may produce?

'Where does he live?'

'In Regent's Park. It is a long way; we generally go by omnibus.'

'Yes.' For the first time Pomona felt a little bit shy. It seemed rather show off and pretensions to mention the carriage and nice pair of horses waiting outside. She would have liked very much to go with Sage in an omnibus, and to have appeared as if such means of conveyance were quite familiar to her.

'I should so like Mr Ludlow to see you,' Sage went on. 'You know he painted Pomona from his memory of his wife who died years ago; so you must be very much like her. He was so very fond of her, even now, after all these years, he keeps her little work-basket always beside him when he paints, and he is always thinking of her. I am sure it would be a great pleasure to him to see any one so like her. But, do you know, the likeness goes off after the first? I can see quite well now that it was not drawn from you. I can see!—'

'Well, what can you see?'

'That you are far more beautiful.'

'What a flattering, little cousin it is, and looking so truthful, too, with those big, Lester eyes.—Sage, I must take you some day to see my mother. She is ill, you know, or she would have come herself; and the doctor has sent her off to Beechfield because London was too much for her. I wanted dreadfully to go too; but she would not let me. You will like her so, Sage—every one does, and she will be so fond of you. I shall dress you up one day in some of the old costumes up in the chest at home, and turn up your hair over a cushion and powder it. They dressed me up once like that for a fancy ball. I thought I should look like one of the old Lester portraits;

but I didn't one bit. They can't make a Lester out of me anyhow.'

'I want Mr Ludlow to see you.'

'Well, why shouldn't I drive home that way with you this afternoon? I should like to see him to.'

And so it was settled; and Pomona went up with Sage while she changed her dress, and sat by with that simple, sunny good-breeding that takes all sense of awkwardness away, so that Sage did not feel till afterwards that the room was shabby, and that Pomona's maid most likely had a better one, and that her cousin never had to hunt in a drawer for one thing and in a box for another, much less sew a button on her boot with her own hands.

They were just two girls together; and if Pomona criticised at all, it was rather to envy the greater freedom her cousin enjoyed without a maid fussing about and interfering, and the easy, picnic sort of existence of doing everything for one's self.

MODERN SAILING-SHIPS.

A MODERN sailing-ship replete with labour-saving appliances is a veritable triumph of the naval architect's art, and an excellent object lesson on man's power over the forces of nature. If Christopher Columbus could revisit our planet from the shades, he would doubtless be astounded by a critical comparison between the tiny wooden caravel with which he discovered a New World, and a leviathan four-masted steel sailing-ship, now navigated in comparative comfort to every possible port where freight is obtainable. Wooden cargo-carrying craft impelled by the unbought wind are surely diminishing in numbers; and in the near future it is not improbable that a stately sailing-ship will be as seldom seen on the waste of waters as a screw steamship was half a century ago. Even looking leisurely backward down the imposing vista of the last thirty years of the Victorian era, it will be readily perceived with what marvellous mastery iron and steel have supplanted, not only wood in the hulls, masts, and yards of sailing-ships, but also hemp in their rigging.

A radical revolution has been effected in the form, size, and construction of these cargo-carriers during such a relatively insignificant interval, and the end is not yet. The old-fashioned type of wooden merchantman remained practically invariable for more than a hundred years; but change is all-powerful at present, so that a vessel is almost of a bygone age before she shall have completed her maiden voyage. It would appear, however, that the limit of size has been reached. Ship-owning firms and shipbuilders will probably soon be compelled to keep the modern steel sailing-ship within more moderate dimensions. Vessels of exceptionally large carrying capacity are in demand owing to the fact that experience proves them to be the best kind for affording a fair return to the capital invested. Salvage appliances and docks do not keep pace with the requirements of such leviathans; so that underwriters evince an increasing dislike to big ships, and the premium for insurance rises accordingly, to compensate for extra risk.

Many mariners and some shipbuilders were at one time quick to express a pronounced opinion that it was quite unnatural for an iron ship to remain afloat. Wood was made to swim, but iron to sink, said these sincere but mistaken admirers of the good old days. Their misgivings have proved to be without foundation in fact, for iron ships have ousted wooden craft almost utterly from the ocean-carrying traffic. Iron has also reached its meridian altitude, and steel is rapidly rising above the horizon of progress. The ship-building yards of Nova Scotia, Canada, the United States of America, and British Columbia, however, still launch wooden sailing-vessels, although in decreasing numbers, and, as a rule, of inconsiderable tonnage.

It seems scarcely credible that only as recently as 1870 there were not more than ten sailing-ships afloat of two thousand tons register and upwards under the red ensign of the British mercantile marine. To-day we have more than that number of splendid steel sailing-ships, each having a register tonnage in excess of three thousand. During the twelve months of 1892 there were turned out from one yard alone on the Clyde, that of Messrs Russell & Co., no fewer than thirteen huge sailing-vessels, varying in register tonnage from two thousand three hundred to three thousand five hundred! One of the largest wooden sailing-ships afloat in 1870 was the 'British Empire,' of two thousand seven hundred tons register, which, under the command of Captain A. Pearson, was an ark of safety to the families of European residents in Bombay during the Indian Mutiny. She had been originally intended for a steamship, and this will account for her exceptional dimensions. The shipbuilding firm of A. Sewall & Co., of Bath, Maine, U.S.A., have probably launched the largest wooden sailing-ships. In 1889 they built the 'Rappahannock,' of 3054 tons register; in 1890, the 'Shenandoah,' 3258 tons; in 1891, the 'Susquehanna,' 2629 tons; and in 1892, the 'Roanoke,' of 3400 tons register.

Several cities claim to be the birthplace of Homer, and there exists similar rivalry with respect to the first iron ship. This at least is certain, that the first iron vessel classed by Lloyd's was the British barque 'Ironside,' in 1838. She was but 271 tons register; and we shall proceed to indicate the gigantic strides that have been made since then in iron and steel shipbuilding. The Clyde stands *facile princeps* in this most important branch of industry. Vessels built on the banks of that river are rendering a praiseworthy account of themselves on every sea and under every flag. A concise statement of last year's output will serve our purpose admirably. Messrs Russell & Co. launched twenty-six large steel sailing-ships, or exactly one a fortnight, having an average register tonnage of 2086. The smallest was 1400 tons, the largest 3500. Messrs Barclay, Curle, & Co. completed five, averaging 2373 tons; Messrs Duncan & Co., five of 2348 tons; Messrs Scott & Co., three of 2250 tons; Messrs Mackie & Thomson, two of 2825 tons; Messrs Hamilton & Co., five of 2095 tons; Messrs D. & W. Henderson, one of 2386 tons; Messrs Stephen & Sons, one of 2066 tons; Messrs Connell & Co., twelve of 1980 tons; Messrs Rodger & Co., seven of 1674

tons. At Leith, Messrs Ramage & Ferguson launched one of 3137 tons; on the Tay, Messrs Thompson & Co., one of 2942 tons; and Messrs Stephen & Sons, one of 2857 tons register. Germany built three similar ships during the year, having a register tonnage of 2400, 2700, and 2895 respectively. No other country launched any iron or steel ships of 2000 tons register or above, but preferred to obtain them from our shipbuilding yards. The so-called protection of native industry principle prevailing in America precludes ship-owners over there from taking advantage directly of the cheapest market. Several of the large sailers, however, built on the Clyde in 1892 were for citizens of the United States, but are necessarily sailed under the British, Hawaiian, or some flag other than that of the country to which they actually belong.

Several of the brand-new sailing-ships specified above have been lost or seriously damaged within a few months of their launch. The 'Thracian,' 2154 tons register, was capsized in a heavy squall off the Isle of Man while towing round in ballast from the Clyde yard to Liverpool in order to receive her first cargo. Not one of her crew was saved, as the vessel and all hands disappeared so suddenly that help from the tugboat was impossible. The Shipmasters' Federation called upon the Board of Trade to inquire into the cause of this appalling catastrophe, but without avail. The 'Crown of Austria,' 3137 tons register, would not answer her helm properly while making a passage, went ashore on the coast of Brazil, and became a total loss. A fire broke out on board the recently launched barque 'Auchmountain,' as she lay at anchor ready to sail on her first voyage, and she blew up in a few hours, the fire having reached some explosives in her cargo.

The number of seamen carried per one hundred tons in the modern four-masted sailing-ship is cut down to the uttermost limit consistent with safety; and, as a consequence, dismasting and tedious passages are not infrequent. The 'Hawaiian Isles,' 2097 tons register, a United States ship under a foreign flag, bound to California with a cargo of coal, found it impossible to weather Cape Horn by reason of violent westerly gales. She was turned round, ran along the lone Southern Ocean, before the 'brave west winds' so admirably described by the illustrious Maury, now gathered to his rest, and eventually reached her destination by the route leading south of Australia. She was one hundred and eighty-nine days on the passage, and no fewer than sixty guineas per cent. had been freely paid for her re-insurance. A similar ship, the 'John Ena,' carrying a substantial cargo of 4222 tons of coal from Barry to San Francisco, also encountered bad weather, made a long passage, and twenty guineas per cent. was paid on her for re-insurance. Another new ship, the 'Achnashie,' 2476 tons register, got into still more serious difficulty under like circumstances. She had to put back to Cape Town, damaged and leaky, after attempting in vain to contend against the bitter blast off Cape Horn. There, her cargo was discharged, and she went into dry dock for the absolutely necessary repairs. The 'Austrasia,' 2718 tons register, was almost totally dismasted near the island of Tristan da Cunha, in the South

Atlantic, on her maiden passage, while bound from Liverpool to Calcutta with a cargo of salt. By dint of sterling seamanship she was brought to Rio Janeiro in safety, returned to Liverpool under improvised masts, discharged her cargo, refitted, took in quite a different cargo at London, and sailed for California. The 'Somali,' 3537 tons register, the largest sailing-ship launched in 1892, has been dismasted in the China Sea. Everything above the lower masts had to be made for her on the Clyde; yet, within fifteen days of the order being received by Messrs Russell & Co., the spars and gear were completed and shipped for passage to the 'Somali' at Hong-kong. Underwriters suffer severely with such ships.

Then, again, coal cargoes of about four or five thousand tons seem specially liable to spontaneous combustion. The 'King James,' 2305 tons register, bound from New South Wales to California with coal, was compulsorily abandoned from this cause, and only a few of her crew were rescued after enduring terrible privations in open boats. Another of these leviathans, the 'Cedarbank,' 2825 tons register, met with a precisely similar misfortune on the same route. Fortunately, however, for all concerned, the fire was successfully kept under until she reached San Francisco, although there had been several slight explosions in the meanwhile.

All the above-mentioned ships were launched in 1892; but several vessels of huge dimensions, launched just previously, have also come to grief. The 'Honresfeld,' with 4570 tons of coal; and the 'Rappahannock,' with 3990 tons, have been totally destroyed by fire. Several others of about the same tonnage have had their coal cargoes dangerously heated. The 'Dunkerque,' 3094 tons; the 'Perseverance,' 2511 tons; the 'Nation,' 2401 tons; the 'Romsdal,' 2000 tons; the 'Ashbank,' 2174 tons; and the 'Eleanor Margaret,' 2327 tons register, have all disappeared, without leaving a trace, as utterly as though they had never been. Better seamanship is required to-day than ever before from masters and officers of these large floating warehouses, exposed to danger both from within and without.

Auxiliary steam-power was once used for the purpose of forcing a sailing-ship through regions of calms and light variable winds, but proved a dismal failure. The marine engineer has not been idle since that day, with the result that increased steam-power is now possible by the employment of smaller engines at a decreased coal consumption. Cargo-space being gained and expenses lessened, ship-owners have been tempted to give this auxiliary screw system another trial. The 'Maria Rickmers,' an enormous five-masted sailing-ship, built on the Clyde for the large Bremen firm of Messrs Rickmers, was thus fitted, and gave rise to great expectations quite recently. She carried nearly 6000 tons of coal from Barry to Singapore, apparently not without grave danger from dismasting or capsizing in a heavy squall, and utterly disappeared with all hands and a cargo of rice on her first homeward passage from Saigon. The forebodings of seamen were in this instance only too well founded. It was wrong to expect that the small crew could handle so large a ship in a case of emergency. A smaller auxiliary barque, the 'Severn,' an American

vessel under British colours, also built on the Clyde, has so far fared well; but the growing tendency of the age is to keep sail and steam quite apart. Twin screws and pole masts are the order of the day.

The largest sailing-ship afloat is the French five-master, 'La France,' launched in 1890 on the Clyde, and owned by Messrs Ant Dom Bordes et Fils, who possess a large fleet of sailing-vessels. In 1891 she came from Iquique to Dunkirk in one hundred and five days with 6000 tons of nitrate; yet she was stopped on the Tyne when proceeding to sea with 5500 tons of coal, and compelled to take out five hundred tons on the ground that she was overladen. There is not a single five-masted sailing-ship under the British flag. The United States has two five-masters, the 'Louis' of 830 tons, and the 'Gov. Ames' of 1778 tons, both fore and aft schooners, a rig peculiar to the American coast. Ships having five masts can be counted on the fingers of one hand; but, strange to say, the steamship 'Coptic,' of the Shaw, Savill, & Albion Co., on her way to New Zealand, in December 1890, passed the 'Gov. Ames' in fourteen degrees south, thirty-four degrees west, bound for California; and two days later, in six degrees south, thirty-one degrees west, the French five-master, 'La France,' bound south. Passengers and crew of the 'Coptic' might travel over many a weary league of sea, and never again be afforded two such excellent object lessons in the growth of sailing-ships in quick succession. The largest three-masted sailing-ship is the 'Ditton,' of 2850 tons.

Sailing-ships sometimes spend long intervals at sea without raising a sail of any kind above their ever-changing horizons. Hence the unique experience of the 'Lorton' and the 'Cockermouth' is well worth recording. They left Liverpool together; and arrived at Astoria, Oregon, within forty-eight hours of each other. Throughout this long passage of over fifteen thousand miles they were not widely separated at any given instant, and for forty days were actually in close company. Captain Steel and his family of the 'Lorton' would dine on board the 'Cockermouth' on one Sunday; and Captain McAdam and his wife of the 'Cockermouth' would pay a return visit to the 'Lorton' on the following Sunday. Life might be made more worth living on sailing-ships, remote from the land, were such an interchange of courtesies always possible.

Some large sailing-ships experience a decided difficulty in obtaining freights that will repay expenses, even ignoring a margin for profit. At San Francisco the 'Agenor' waited for a cargo from October 1891 to July 1893. The 'Auchencairn' arrived at that port in March 1892; the 'Argo,' 'Bothwell,' 'Dunfermline,' and 'Glenlui,' in February 1892; the 'Bardowie' in January 1892; and the 'Netherby' in April 1892. Not one of these ships had obtained a charter up to the commencement of July 1893. Shareholders will scarcely find that shipping is a remunerative investment. At times, however, the charterers stand to lose considerably. Two British ships, the 'Minister of Marine' and the 'Alexander Yeats,' arrived at Manila in 1889, under a charter to load hemp. The charterers speculated for a falling market, which did not happen, kept the two ships idle in port for nearly ten months,

and eventually sent them home with sugar cargoes under new charters. The claims for demurrage were paid regularly to the shipmasters day by day, in accordance with the law, and reached the following exceptional amounts: 'Minister of Marine' £5028; 'Alexander Yeats,' £4986. On the other hand, in ordinary circumstances, both loading and unloading are carried out with a celerity that defies description. Not long since, the 'Commonwealth,' a sailing-ship from San Francisco, discharged 3000 tons of golden grain at Liverpool, and was ballasted ready for sea again in twenty-seven hours. Last June the 'Cressington' took in a full cargo of 3180 tons of coal at Newcastle, Australia, and sailed for Valparaiso, having occupied only fifty-three hours from the time of entering port till her loading was completed. Nevertheless, we are reluctantly compelled to confess that the days of sailing-ships are almost numbered. The cry for huge sailers is an evidence that steam is determining the dimensions of the most modern cargo-carriers under sail.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DESERT.

CHAPTER II.

THE Pattens came of a squatting family. The father had been the owner of a compact and paying sheep station in the south-west of New South Wales. He died shortly after the death of his two sons in Queensland; and the youngest son, who had lately visited Bendabar, now held possession of the property, owning a half-share, and managing for his mother and two younger sisters who inherited the other half.

It was some three months after his northern visit, and he sat in the small veranda room that did duty as an office, regarding a letter he had just received from New Zealand. The letter was from Hopwood, in reply to one from Patten, Hopwood having forwarded his address on seeing the advertisement that had been inserted. The writer described the position of the place to the best of his memory, but candidly stated that, after such a lapse of time, and the alteration entailed by cutting the timber, and the effect of the flood, he did not suppose he could do more than go approximately near the spot, even if he visited the locality.

From Jim Turner there had been no response; and Patten moodily thought that his only plan would be to go back and turn up about half a mile of the bank; and even then, with the utmost care, such a small article as a salmon tin might easily be missed.

The whole affair had an atmosphere of mystery about it that was depressing. In the first place, Burgess, when he returned, had managed to evade a personal interview. Both Patten and his father had been naturally anxious to see him, and hear from his own lips the account of the tragedy; but although Burgess had written several letters, he always managed to miss any appointments, and finally disappeared without leaving any address. Young Patten was then bent upon going up to Queensland and personally searching for the remains; but his father was breaking up—he could not be spared from the station; and

so he had perforce to remain until it was too late to do any good.

The years rolled on, and he had almost forgotten the fancies that had troubled him when he first heard of the catastrophe. He and his half-brother, who was the only child of the first wife, had always mutually disliked each other, and Robert Patten, the younger, had strongly objected to his brother's going on the trip. The eldest son had always been of a morose, passionate nature, and had systematically bullied his young half-brothers until they were old enough to resent it. This, the youngest one, did more than his brother, who was of a quieter disposition. In consequence, it was with rather a prejudiced mind that Robert now turned over the various circumstances that had lately cropped up concerning the deaths in the west of Queensland.

In the first place, he had met an old friend, who said to him: 'By the way, I always understood that your eldest brother died in the bush in Queensland.'

'So he did, I am sorry to say.'

'Well, I saw either him or his ghost in Adelaide about two years ago.'

'Nonsense, man!—a case of mistaken identity.'

'It is *you* who are talking nonsense, my boy. Why, I know your brother Alf Patten better than I do you.'

'Did you speak to him?'

'No. In fact, to tell you the truth, he seemed to avoid me.'

'It must have been a ghost, then. If it had been my brother, why should he have avoided you, and why has he not come home?'

'Well, it was a wonderful likeness. I was on my way home to England at the time; and I certainly told several people on board, who knew him and had heard of his death, about it.'

Patten was naturally disturbed by such a piece of information. If his brother was alive, he owned the whole of the station, and all the property left by his father, for the will, made shortly before his father's death, only left it between his mother, sisters, and himself, contingent upon the deaths of his two brothers being confirmed; for, owing to the strange reluctance shown by Burgess to a personal meeting, the old man had been impressed with the idea that Burgess had deserted his companions, and, in reality, knew nothing of their fate. Under these circumstances, why should his brother stay away, if alive?

Not many weeks after this, the letter from Burgess arrived, enclosed in one from a brother, stating that the writer was dead, and had requested that on his death the enclosed should be forwarded as directed. Burgess in his letter merely said that he had buried certain papers belonging to his brother confided to his care, and gave a description of the place. He made no explanation of his motive for concealing the papers, nor for his conduct in avoiding an interview, but wound up with the ominous sentence: 'In those papers you will find the true account of your brother's death.' It was noticeable that he only referred to one brother, although he had stated to everybody that both were dead.

Patten mused dejectedly for some time, then wrote a short letter to Hopwood, thanking him for his letter.

'Blanche,' he said that evening to his eldest

sister, whom he had to a certain extent taken into his confidence, 'I have already told you that I have reason to believe that Alf is still alive. Now, I want you to communicate this belief to the others, for I should not be surprised to see him turn up any day.'

'Surely, Bob, you have not heard from him, have you?' she returned, in surprise.

'No; but I have reason to think that the only obstacle to his reappearance has been removed. If he is alive, as I believe, I am pretty confident that we shall see something of him shortly.'

'But it will make an awful difference to you, will it not? In the station, I mean.'

'Certainly; it all belongs to him. Our mother will have a third by law, which will be enough for her and you girls; but I shall be asked to leave, you may be sure, as soon as Alf comes in possession. Fortunately, I have made a little money on my own account during the last ten years, so shall not be quite penniless.'

His sister left him; and Robert remained smoking on the moonlit veranda. Like a flash of light, it had suddenly illumined his mind that the reason Alf did not reappear was because of Burgess. Once he heard of Burgess's death, he would not hesitate to come and claim his heritage. There was now no doubt in his mind. Burgess had been either a witness or accomplice in some deed that would not bear the light of day.

He turned to go inside the house, when the tread of a horse approaching made him look round. Instinctively, he knew who was coming—the supposed dead man had returned to his own place.

In the bright clear moonlight he easily recognised the rider, who dismounted, and hung his bridle on the picket fence that surrounded the garden, then approached the gate that led to the house.

Robert called to his sister: 'Blanche! our expected visitor has come;' and strolled down the path to meet his half-brother.

'Well, Bob,' said the latter as they met, 'I suppose you hoped never to see me again?'

'On the contrary, Alf,' said Robert quietly, 'I have been expecting you for some time. What have you been keeping up this farce so long for?'

'That I will tell you presently. Are we to go back on the old terms, although ten years have passed? Have you got neither word nor hand to welcome a fellow?'

'Let's have a mutual explanation first, both with regard to Sam's death and your silence.'

'Very well. Evidently, you are not pleased at the boss coming home. Will you tell one of the fellows to turn my horse out? and then we will see if the others of you are a little warmer in their welcome.'

Robert called one of the men, who took the horse; and the two men entered the house.

Mrs Patten and the girls received the wanderer with at any rate an assumption of cordiality. They knew nothing of the graver doubts that tormented their brother, and, with womanly tenderness, endeavoured to make the unexpected arrival feel that he was welcome to his own home. The ten years of absence had not altered him much, save that, to Robert, he seemed coarser and rougher in his manner and conversation, as though

his time had been passed amongst inferior associates.

He at once told his stepmother that he was going to have a long talk with his half-brother, and explain his absence; and taking the hint, the women soon retired and left the two men together. Both smoked in silence for a while, then Alf suddenly remarked: 'What did that hound Burgess say when he got in?'

Robert had anticipated the question. He handed his brother one of the old newspapers containing the printed account.

The other read it through in silence. 'A tissue of lies, with a word of truth here and there,' was his comment when he came to the end. 'How did you think I was alive, after such a statement as that?'

'Old Broadhurst saw you in Adelaide over two years ago.'

'Did Burgess tell you any more than he has done here?'

'I never saw him. For some unaccountable reason, he dodged me always, and I could not get a personal interview with him.'

'Now I will tell you what really happened,' said Alf. 'In the first place, the statement that we were successful in getting beyond the South Australian border for some distance is true. On our return, we camped near a patch of poison-plant, and lost a number of our horses. That also is true.'

'The bones of the horses have been found,' interjected Robert.

'But no human remains?' said the other, somewhat hastily.

'No.'

'Of course, because there were none to find—at least, there. We got on to a dry stage, and found the water we depended on, dry. That is true. Now come the lies. We stopped at that dry hole, dead-beat, and debated what was best to be done. Before us were about fifty miles of dry country, and at the end of it, an uncertainty. Behind us were thirty miles of dry country and the water we had left, a certainty. We decided to turn back after taking a few hours' rest. We had only five horses left. Two of them were fairly strong, and the other three weak and knocked up. That night, while we slept, Burgess sneaked off with the two strong horses and nearly all the water and rations, and left us to our fate. No wonder he would not meet you.'

Both men were silent after this disclosure.

'What happened then?' said Robert at last.

'When we awoke and found Burgess gone, we could do nothing but tramp back to the water we had left. There we arrived more dead than alive, with two out of the three horses, the other one having died on the road. We decided to make for the Overland Telegraph Line. This, to make a long story short, eventually we did; but I was the only one who reached it. The black boy died, I cannot say of what. He gave in, and lost pluck. Sam was speared by the natives on a creek about a hundred miles east of the line, and died in about an hour. We had used up every cartridge when they tackled us, or it would not have happened.'

Robert started at these words, for they seemed such an echo of the story told by Burgess; and yet, according to this version, Burgess could have

known nothing of the fate of the men he deserted.

'I got to the Line, and luckily came across a repairing party, and they took me in to Barrow Creek Station'—

'And with the telegraph right at your hand, you never wired our father a word of either Sam or yourself?' interrupted Robert.

Alf got up, and impatiently walked about the room. 'To tell you the truth, I had not the heart. I blamed myself right through. I had no business to persuade Sam to come and risk his life. I would rather you thought us both dead, than have to come home alone; I felt that I had been the cause of his death.'

'What did you do then, Alf?'

'We had seen some good country on our way across; and when I got down to Adelaide, I took up the lease of it and sold it very well. I fell in with some men going to South Africa; and as I had a roving fit on me, I joined them, and was there five years. I volunteered for the Zulu War, and saw a good deal of it. Then I came back to Australia, and went up to the gold rush at Kimberley. Everywhere I did well, just because I did not particularly want it, I suppose. At last I got tired of knocking about, and determined to come home and declare myself. I may as well tell you that I had seen the notice of the man's death in a Sydney paper; and you know as well as I do that after his death there is not a soul here who would not prefer that I had never returned. I am not, and never was, a favourite with my father's second family. As it is, I suppose that I appear to oust you; but I have no intention of doing so. There is enough for us all. I could never play the part of the modern squatter.'

'It is late, Alf,' said Robert, rising. 'I have much to think of. Believe me, that nobody here is sorry to see you back; but you must admit that your silence and absence under such circumstances as the death of Sam were peculiar. Is it not so?'

'Perhaps; but I presume you are satisfied as to my own identity?—Tell me,' he went on, as his brother halted for a moment at the door, 'has little Kate Rudder grown up as pretty as she promised to be?'

'Miss Rudder,' returned Robert coldly, 'has grown up as pretty and good as she promised to be.—Now, good-night. Your old room is ready for you; you know the way.' He closed the door almost as he spoke.

Left to himself, Alf smiled somewhat grimly. 'I touched Master Bob on a tender spot, seemingly. Evidently he has his eye on Kate Rudder.' He turned the lamp out and went to his room.

It was quite true Alf Patten had touched upon a tender spot when he mentioned Kate Rudder's name to his brother. The Rudders owned the neighbouring station, and the two families had always been on the most friendly footing. Kate, the youngest, and only unmarried girl, was now a brilliant and beautiful young woman of one-and-twenty, with half-a-dozen aspirants for her hand. Robert was sorely smitten, and had reason to believe that he had some chance of success; but his brother's remark gave him some troubled thoughts that night. Robert Patten, the owner of half the station and a good deal of other

property, and Robert Patten beginning life afresh on a small and limited capital, were two very different men. He had no reason to think the girl mercenary or capricious; but his nature had a warp of distrust in it which often led him to suspect the motives of other people without cause; and in the present instance influenced him against accepting the liberal speeches of his returned relative without large discount.

TATTERED VOLUMES.

THE manner in which books are regarded by literary workers is a somewhat curious subject, and a short account thereof may possibly prove not uninteresting.

Among those who have won more or less fame by the pen may be counted many different specimens of the book-lover, from the genuine bibliomaniac to the voracious and tasteless reader who regards a book as mere leather and paper—a collection of material for the acquisition of knowledge. It is scarcely necessary to remark that there is often a wide discrepancy between a man's tastes and desires and their fulfilment. Many a book-lover lacks the wherewithal to approach in any way to his idea of a suitable covering for his favourite volumes. Sometimes one has to turn amateur bookbinder. Even Southey occasionally bound a volume himself. He once presented a copy of his 'Madoc,' in quarto, to a neighbour and friend in the Lake District, and the volume is still in existence, with the following inscription:

Mr Stranger, from the author.
This book, binding and all,
Is the handiwork of Greta Hall.
R. S.

Leigh Hunt, speaking of Matthias Corvinus, who bound his books in vellum and gold, says: 'Not being a king of Hungary, nor rich, nor having a confessor to absolve us from sins of expenditure, how lucky is it that we can take delight in books whose outsides are of the homeliest description! . . . We should have liked to challenge the majesty of Hungary to a bout at bookbinding, and seen which would have ordered the most intense and ravishing "legatura," something at which De Seuil or Grolier himself should have "sigh'd and look'd and sigh'd again;" something which would have made him own that there was nothing between it and an angel's wing. Meantime, nothing comes amiss to us but dirt or tatters, or cold, plain calf, school binding—a thing which we hate for its insipidity and formality.'

Charles Lamb, careful enough as to the insides of what he called his 'midnight darlings,' was unable to clothe them all in decent attire. In his delightful 'Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading,' he says in his quaint and paradoxical style: 'To view a well-arranged assortment of blockheaded Encyclopædias (Anglicanas or Metropolitanas) set out in an array of russias or morocco, when a tithe of that good leather would comfortably reclothe my shivering folios; would renovate Paracelsus himself, and enable old Raymond Lully to look like himself again in the

world. I never see these impostors but I long to strip them, to warm my ragged veterans in their spoils.' Yet he contended that 'in some respects the better a book is, the less it demands from binding.' Crabb Robinson describes the library of his friend the 'gentle Elia' as 'the finest collection of shabby books I ever saw; such a number of first-rate works in very bad condition is, I think, nowhere to be found.' On being once asked how he knew his books, Lamb replied: 'How does a shepherd know his sheep?'

Burton, in his 'Book-hunter,' gives an amusing account of De Quincey's famous collection of books. 'Some legend there is of a book creditor having forced his way into the Cæus den, and there seen a sort of rubble inner wall of volumes, with their edges outward; while others, bound and unbound, the plebeian sheepskin and the aristocratic russian, were squeezed into certain tubs drawn from the washing establishment of a confiding landlady.'

The famous reviewer Jeffrey treated with disdain the bookbinder's delicate art. Books were merely meant to be read, he contended, and he was quite satisfied so long as the words were visible. Lord Cockburn laments the fact that Jeffrey's library was, 'for a lover of books, and for one who had picked up a few, most wretched; and so ill cared for that the want even of a few volumes never disturbed him.' Carlyle, in his *Reminiscences*, describes the study of his brilliant countryman as 'a roomy, not overneat, apartment on the ground-floor, with a big baize-covered table loaded with book-rows and paper bundles. On one, or perhaps two, of the tables were book-shelves, likewise well filled, but with books in tattery, ill-bound, or unbound condition.'

It is pleasant to find that a greater Scotsman than Jeffrey, Adam Smith, paid particular attention to the outsides of his books, and sought relief from his researches into the mysteries of the 'dismal science' in the choice of leather and decorations. 'I am a beau,' was his remark, 'in nothing but my books.'

Jeffrey, in describing his introduction to Scott, says he found him 'in a small den, on the sunk floor of his father's house in George Square, surrounded with dingy books.' From what has already been said of his own library, it would be interesting to know the exact meaning he attached to the word 'dingy.' Years afterwards, Lockhart thus described Sir Walter's collection: 'The walls were entirely clothed with books, most of them folios and quartos, and all in that complete state of repair which at a glance reveals a tinge of bibliomania.' He also adds that 'the old bindings had obviously been retouched and regilt in the most approved manner; the new, when the books were of any mark, were rich, but never gaudy—a large proportion of blue morocco—all stamped with the *device* of the portcullis, and its motto, "Clausus tutus ero"—being an anagram of his name in Latin.'

It was Burton's opinion that in this respect 'poets are apt to be ragamuffins.' Wordsworth holds a high position in the ranks of those gentry. His library was once described as 'the most wretched thing that ever went by the name—a mere litter of tattered old volumes on a few shelves.' De Quincey, by no means inclined

towards bibliomania, describes the books of the great Lake poet as 'ill-bound or not bound at all—in boards, sometimes in tatters; many of them imperfect as to the number of volumes as well as mutilated as to the number of pages.'

James Thomson also belonged to the brigade of ragamuffins. It is said that he used to cut the leaves of books with his snuffers. There is a good story of the poet in Burton's Book-hunter, which deserves to be given at length. 'He had,' says Burton, 'an uncle, a clever, active mechanic, who could do many things with his hands, and contemplated James's indolent, dreamy, "feckless" character with impatient disgust. When the first of the "Seasons"—Winter it was, I believe—had been completed at press, Jamie thought, by a presentation copy, to triumph over his uncle's scepticism; and, to propitiate his good opinion, he had the book handsomely bound. The old man never looked inside, or asked what the book was about, but, turning it round and round with his fingers, in grateful admiration, exclaimed: "Come, is that really our Jamie's doin' now?—Weel, I never thought the cratur wad hae had the handicraft to do the like!"'

Goldsmith was as careless with his books as with his money; and though his library at one time contained many curious and rare books, he never hesitated to tear out a leaf to save either time or trouble. Sir John Hawkins relates how, when engaged on his historical researches about music, Goldsmith told him some curious things one night at the club. Hawkins asked him to put them in writing, and promised to call for them. Of course, Goldsmith was not ready when his friend called, but he quickly took down a book and tore out six leaves containing the information. In Mr Austin Dobson's poem, 'The Book-plate's Petition,' is the following reference to another great man who was occasionally rough on books:

This was a scholar, one of those
Whose Greek is sounder than their hose;
He loved old books and nappy ale,
So lived at Streatham, next to Thrale.
'Twas there this stain of grease I boast
Was made by Dr Johnson's toast.

A CHRISTMAS AT THE RIDGE HOUSE.

WE were just four at the Ridge House: Richard Hardy (that is my father); John Warne, my husband; the two-year-old babe called 'Little Dick;' and myself. The Ridge is a desolate place: it is just a bank of sand and shingle, some eight or nine miles long; in front, there is the sea; and behind the house, the river and the marshes. In winter-time the marshes are often flooded, and then there seems to be naught but water all round one. I have lived there nearly all my life, for my father has been tideman many a long year. Just by our house are the flood-gates; and when the water in the marsh dikes is above a certain height, we have to open the gates at the ebb-tide and let the water down through a great iron pipe into the sea. But the gates must be shut ere the flood-tide runs back, for that is higher than the marshes; and if once the salt water ran through, all the good grass would be rotted; not to speak of what

might happen in rough weather if once the strong waves began to run through to the land-side of the Ridge.

It was two days before Christmas; we had had a frost; but the ice was melting now, and we knew well the water would soon run down from inland over the marshes. It comes a deal quicker, since all the drain-pipes have been laid down in the fields.

'John,' said my father that Monday morning, 'if ye want naught from the village, get it to-day against Christmas. There is a storm coming.'

So John went in with the great basket; and well it was he went then, for the wind had risen ere he came back; and weary work it was for him to carry the heavy basket along the five miles of Ridge; and the wind grew higher after.

At ebb-tide, father and I went out to let the water off. Oh, it had risen more than I could have believed! It must have been snow-water from the hills. I never saw it so before or since. We opened the big gate; but when the water began to go through, all the ice came up in great blocks and fared to fill up the way; so we had to get a rake and pole to keep it clear. When we were hard at work, who should come by but Wilkins, the man that lives in the watch-house two miles on. He was not much of a neighbour then. I had said him 'Nay' afore I married John, and he wasn't one to forget. But that day, as I saw him pass, I was thinking just of the babe left all alone in bed, and I called to him to lend father a helping hand while I ran round to the house.

'I've got but two hands,' said he; 'and they're for my own work;' and with that he passed on.

'Never mind, Mary,' said father. 'You go to the babe; that is what is right.'

I suppose I was right; but in I went, right or wrong, and gave the boy his dinner and put the fire to rights; then John came in, and I sent him round to father, for the ice frightened me; I could hear it crashing and groaning from the house.

Just after John went out, I heard him call. Father, poor dear, had got tired, and had sat down all hot as he was; and now he was set hard and stiff with the rheumatics. Oh, the job we had to get him home and to bed; and there we had to leave him, for the tide was running in, and John could not shut the gates without me to keep the ice back. I thought it a dreadful time, not knowing that worse was coming.

When the gates were shut, I went in and sat by father. He looked very bad, and in my heart came hard thoughts of Wilkins. Why couldn't he have stopped and saved the old man from doing more than his strength could bear?

John went to bed for a bit, for we had a long night's work before us at the ebb-tide; and I lay down; but I couldn't sleep, the wind howled so. Little Dick was frightened too, but only held my hand, and didn't cry, for I said, 'Father's asleep.' There never was so good a babe! By-and-by he fell asleep; and when we had to go out, I just laid him on his grandfather's bed. Father looked a little better, and I gave him a hot drink before I took the lantern to start. It was a job to stand against the wind;

but that wasn't what made John stumble; it was a great log that used to lie down by the pipe-mouth.

'Mary,' said he—and his voice shook—'the sea's never been up here.'

'Heaven help us!' said I, 'if it has, for tomorrow's the spring-tide, and where will it be then?'

I tied the lantern up against the gate. The flood had risen higher than ever. It was terrible work keeping the ice back; but we felt as if we were working for our lives; for if the flood rose much higher, it would be almost over the bank; and with another high tide the waters would meet, and where would Ridge House be then?

The water ran through better now, and John said directly the gates were shut, he would go round to the village for help against the next tide. But when we came to slide the gate, it wouldn't stay. One of the great iron holds was gone—cracked through by the frost, and knocked off by the ice, I suppose. John held the shutter while I went back for bolts and screws. No one can know what it was like doing up that gate! We were both obliged to be half in the icy water; and the sea came roaring up the great iron tunnel, and we had only the lantern for light in the dreadful howling darkness. When it was done at last, we crawled back to the house; we were all drenched, and almost frozen. John made me change my clothes, and then I threw myself down on the bed and slept. I seemed to have only been asleep a moment, when I awoke at the sound of voices. It was daylight. John and father were talking. Father said he had heard the water against the house in the night. John went down to open the gate and look for the tide-marks, while I got the breakfast and dressed the child. Father managed to get up, and I didn't stop him, for I couldn't bear to think of his lying in bed to be drowned, if it came to that. I kissed Dick quite gently; but I felt mad at heart; and when father tried to teach him the Christmas words, I went out to John, for I couldn't bear it. What peace was there for me, and my child going to be drowned?

I told John I must go to the village—it was seven miles, but I thought I could get there. It was no use, however. When I had gone a few hundred yards, I got on to the loose sand, and having no foothold, I was blown down over and over again, and could only come back. When it was time to shut the gate, I tried to do it, while John stayed to stop the ice; but I couldn't stir it as we had done it up, so John had to do it for me, it moved so stiffly. Then we went in. The sea kept rising. Father prayed. I sat by the fire, and John walked about the room. There was no good in his going for help now, for this was the time of need. All at once he stopped in front of the window. 'Where's the watch-house?' said he; and well he might, for it was gone! It had been a little black house, built on a bit of bank between the Ridge and the great dike. Nothing was there now but foaming water, for the flood was rough like the sea.

'Wilkins must be drowned,' said John.

'Serve him right; and a good thing too,' said I. I felt quite mad.

John got his glass. 'I see him,' he said; 'he's on a spar. The house can't have gone long;' and with that he went to the door.

I went after him. As I expected, he was turning over our little punt. 'What are you going to do, John Warne?' I said, hard and cold. 'Who is to move the flood-gate? for I can't,' and I pointed to the icy water. 'You will never get back across the water; and if the gates stay shut, this house will be gone ere night.'

He turned round like one struck dumb and went into the kitchen.

Father looked at us both and said nothing. Then John did a strange thing—he cried. I'd never seen him cry before, and it frightened me. Then I spoke. 'John,' I said, quite gently, 'you can't go, for the sake of the lives here, and maybe those up country in the "lookers" cottages. But though I said "Serve him right," I'll go, not for Wilkins' sake, but for yours, John.'

Then John got up; but father stopped him; and I just kissed them all, and ran out, and pushed the boat into the water all in a minute, for I feared John would go after all. And as I put off, John came out, looking all stunned with trouble and the cold. After that, I had enough to do keeping the boat from the ice. I had the wind with me; and in about half an hour I got to where Wilkins was still clinging to the spar. I thought of his words about his two hands being for his own work, and I felt quite savage again. But when I got up to him, I helped him in, and dangerous it was. I thought the boat would have been over. Then I wrapped him up in a long piece of herring-net out of the locker, and turned to go home. While I was settling Wilkins, the boat had drifted on; and when I turned her head round, I found it was a very much harder thing to go back against the wind than it was to come with it. I was tired out, too, you see; and I began to wonder whether the tide was in. The spray was flying in great sheets over the Ridge; but every now and then I caught sight of our house, a black speck in the distance.

I pulled; but I didn't seem to make way; the ice kept coming up against us. At last the boat got stuck fast in a great ice-sheet, and I couldn't move her any way. I drew the oars in, for there was nothing to be done; the ice was too thick to break round the boat. The wind blew us on, boat and ice together, round the bend of the Ridge. I couldn't see our home now, and I didn't know what might be happening there. Wilkins lay white, and like one dead, at the bottom of the boat. Perhaps he was dead, and I had done no good after all.

And then John and Dick and father, they'd never been in trouble before without me with them; but what could I do now? Then I thought of father praying, and I prayed. I don't know what I said, and I don't think I said much. The cold seemed getting greater, but I seemed fading away from the cold and trouble. I fancied, somehow, through it all I was going into 'Christmas peace.'

I must have slept a long time: when I woke, John was standing over me; people were rubbing my hands; some one poured brandy down my throat. I had been all but frozen to death!

When I opened my eyes, John cried again; he

was weak with the toil and trouble; but now we could rest, for the men had come from the village—six of them. John had walked across that rotten ice with a rope, and somehow they had got the punt ashore. They carried us back, for Wilkins was worse than I was, though not dead; and now the wind had dropped, for the frost had come back; and as we went along the Ridge, I heard the bells ringing inland. 'Joy-bells' for Christmas! They were joy-bells for me, for those at home were safe. Nigh washed away, they had been; but the wind fell just in time to save them.

'Thank God!' said father; and so said we all.

The great folks since then, they have made a deal of my going for Wilkins; but I said to John: 'You were the bravest, for you wanted to go when I didn't; and then you let me go, which was harder than going yourself.'

And he said: 'I don't know, lass, that I should have let you go if I had been quick enough to stop you.'

WINGLESS BIRDS.

By FRED. V. THEOBALD, B.A., F.E.S.

JUST as Australia is peculiar for its remarkable marsupial fauna and gigantic fossil kangaroos, so is New Zealand for its peculiar Wingless Birds, living and extinct. Of these wingless forms there are not many known, but those that we are acquainted with are of great interest. Were it not for man's presence upon the earth, there is little doubt that we should have many more of these apterous birds, for history and tradition clearly show that several of them have been exterminated by man and by the introduction of his domestic animals. The *Ratitæ*, the group to which most of the living wingless birds belong, are found in Africa, where the representative is the ostrich, the largest of all the living aves, attaining sometimes the height of eight feet; in America, where the rheas are found extending into Patagonia and Peru; in Australia by the emu; in New Guinea and Moluccan Islands by the cassowary; and in New Zealand by the curious wingless apteryx or kiwi-kiwi of the Maoris. The African ostriches are the most important to us financially, for from these birds the much-sought-after ostrich feathers are obtained.

Strictly speaking, none of the living *Ratitæ* are wingless birds, for all possess a small and rudimentary pair of wings, although they are too small to be used as organs of flight. The ostriches run with extraordinary speed, and can give the fastest horse some trouble in pursuing them. The male ostrich is like a Mormon, fond of many wives! These polygamous birds generally keep together in small flocks, and lay their eggs, sometimes three pounds in weight, in holes scratched in the sand. It is generally supposed that they are then left, and are hatched by the heat of the sun—a fallacious notion, for the parents look

after them, like all other birds; according to Mr Selater, the male alone does this, but authorities seem to disagree. The ostriches of America are quite distinct from those of Africa, and have a feathery head instead of a naked one. These rheas are also polygamous, and inhabit the great plains of South America, and are especially abundant along the La Plata.

Our next wingless form, the emu, comes from Australia. We shall find that all the living representatives of this remarkable group of birds in this part of the globe are clothed with feathers that are scarcely distinguishable from ordinary hair. The '*Dromæus novæ hollandæ*,' as naturalists designate the emu, is not unlike the ostrich in size, form, and habits; but there is one important difference that the hunter soon finds out, and that is, that the emu can kick with more deadly effect than the ostrich. The latter bird kicks forward, as we do; but the emu kicks backwards and sideways, like a cow. Little chance of escape has the unlucky hunter or hound that approaches near the back of this bird before it is tired out. The flesh of the emu is very good, and for this reason they are hunted and destroyed. So great has been the destruction, that fears are entertained that it may soon be numbered with the other extinct wingless forms that man has largely to account for.

From New Guinea, Moluccas, Malay Archipelago, and North Australia, another genus of struthious birds has been found—namely, the cassowary; not that notorious creature that 'ate the missionary on the plains of Timbuctoo,' for the true cassowary is only found in Oceania and the Malay Archipelago.

Although the wingless birds just mentioned attract much attention, there is nothing particularly striking in them, unless it be their remarkable grandeur; but when we come to the wingless forms of New Zealand, we cannot help being surprised at their extraordinary appearance. Australia is often called the 'Fossil Continent,' and rightly too, for its mammals, fish, and plants carry our minds back to long past ages; and we can say the same of New Zealand, if we look at the wingless apteryx. The kiwi—as the Maoris call this wingless creature—reminds us of no living bird, but calls to our recollection the birds which may have left those footprints on the sandy flats of Triassic times. These weird-looking kiwis vary in size from that of a fowl to that of a turkey. There is scarcely a trace of wings; the whole head and body is clothed with long hair-like gray and chestnut-brown feathers. The thick, tough skin is much valued by the Maori chiefs; and to their continual hunts after them is due the rapid disappearance of these remarkable birds. They have survived so long chiefly on account of their nocturnal habits. The natives hunt them by torchlight, when they come out at night to feed upon the insects and worms. Four species seem to be known; but all are rapidly becoming scarce, and, as Wallace rightly says, 'they will no doubt gradually become extinct.' Not so many years ago, the apteryx was thought by many scientific men to be a fabulous bird, just as the giraffe in olden

times was considered a myth. The first living specimen was brought over in 1852, and deposited in the Zoological Gardens, London, and, to every one's satisfaction, it laid several eggs. Perhaps the eggs of the apteryx are even more remarkable than the bird itself, for they often weigh as much as one-fourth of the weight of the whole bird. We find their fossil remains with those of the huge extinct 'Moa birds.'

Few birds have been more freely discussed than the moas, a group of struthious birds of enormous size, which inhabited New Zealand during and prior to the period of human occupation, and which, according to some authorities, only became extinct just before Captain Cook's discovery of the islands. Many of the moas were much larger than the ostrich. They agree in many features with the apteryx; while in their short beak and other important peculiarities they resembled the emu and the cassowary. These gigantic birds sometimes reached the height of eleven and twelve feet. Their remains are found in great abundance, and from them many complete skeletons have been formed in all stages of development, whilst their eggs are often preserved with their bones. That they were co-existent with man is shown by the fact that their remains are found in abundance in the kitchen-middens, whilst some of the bones are charred and cut. The first discovery of these giant birds was due to the Rev. W. Colenso, who also first determined their struthious affinities. In 1842 this gentleman wrote: 'During the summer of 1838 I accompanied the Rev. W. Williams on a visit to the tribes inhabiting the East Cape district. While at Waiapu, I heard, from the natives, of a certain monstrous animal. While some said it was a bird, and others a person, all agreed that it was a moa; that in general appearance it somewhat resembled an immense domestic cock, with the difference, however, that it had a face like a man's; that it lived on air, and was guarded by two immense Tnataras, who, Argus-like, kept incessant watch while the moa slept. Also, that if any one ventured to approach the dwelling of this wonderful creature, he would be invariably trampled on and killed by it.' A mountain named Whakapumaki was spoken of as the residence of this creature; but only one existed, which was said to be the sole survivor of the race of moas. For a long time it was hoped some solitary living specimen might be found in some high mountain region; but now all chance of finding this interesting and uncanny creature has vanished.

Mr J. Hamilton records an interview with an old native who asserted he had seen Captain Cook and also the last moa, and he described it as a very large bird with a neck like a horse. Whether any one has seen the bird is still very doubtful; but that it was co-existent with man—either ancient moa-hunting Maoris, or a moa-hunting race that inhabited New Zealand prior to the Maori invasion—is definitely shown by the bones and eggs being found with the evidences of man in those curious kitchen-middens and caves. Not only are the bones and eggs found, but in several instances the tendons and feathers attached to their skin have been discovered. The question is, How did these birds become extinct? There is no doubt that man has had the chief

hand in their eradication. To moa-hunting men their disappearance must be largely attributed; but certain evidence also shows that the glacial period has had no small finger in the pie in this matter. 'The recent existence of the moa, and its having been finally exterminated by the Maoris,' says Wallace, 'appears to be at length set at rest by the statement of Mr John White, a gentleman who has been initiated by their priests into all their mysteries, and who has been collecting materials for a history of the natives, and is said to know more of the history, customs, and habits of the Maoris than they do themselves. He says that the histories and songs abound in allusions to the moa, and that they were able to give full accounts of its habits, food, season of the year it was killed, &c.' Although the moas are called wingless birds, they, too, like the other Ratitæ, have rudiments of wings. It is probable that these struthious birds do not owe their imperfect wings to a direct evolution from some ancestral reptile form, but to a retrograde development from some low type of winged bird analogous to that which has produced the dodo of Mauritius from a more highly developed pigeon-form.

The dodo has become extinct, we know, during the last two hundred years. Mauritius, Rodriguez, and Bourbon (now Réunion) are remarkable as being the home of this curious group of ground-birds, quite incapable of flight. Leguat, who resided in Rodriguez in 1692, gives an admirable figure of the species on that island called the Solitaire. All these Dididæ were helpless creatures, and were soon destroyed by man and his animals. We have strong evidence that the origin of these large wingless 'ground-pigeons' must date back to early Tertiary times. Some ancestral 'ground-pigeon' like the *Didunculus* of Samoa must have reached Mauritius by means of intervening islands, afterwards sunk; and there, on this isolated spot, they remained and increased, free from the attack of any more powerful animal. We can easily see how their wings, being useless, would become abortive. They might even be prejudicial to the birds; for those that flew about would be blown out to sea and destroyed; whilst those that had small wings would roost upon the ground, and thus be sheltered from the violent hurricanes that continually sweep across these islands.

There are other extinct wingless birds, rails, also found; and in Rodriguez an almost wingless heron. Another large apterous bird, known as the *Æpyornis*, has recently been brought before the notice of the public by the sale of its semi-fossil egg for the large sum of sixty pounds eighteen shillings. This *Æpyornis* was a native of Madagascar, and is related to the moas and ostriches. It was as large, or larger than the moas of New Zealand. Its eggs were of enormous size, often reaching fourteen inches in diameter, and equal in capacity to six eggs of an ostrich.

There are several other wingless birds of different groups existing at the present day, and from them, as well as from other reasons, we can safely say that the wingless struthious birds, the emus, the ostriches, moas, and the dodo, are simply degenerate or retrograde forms, and not birds of low type with wings as yet undeveloped. There is good reason for believing that the

Ratitæ are a very ancient group, for we find the remains of the moa in New Zealand long prior to man's advent. Day by day, they and other wingless birds are becoming things of the past.

NEGRO COFFEE.

NEGRO or Wild Coffee is the name that has been given to Fedegozo seeds, on account of their being used in western tropical Africa and in some of the West India Islands by the natives as a substitute for coffee. In some of the French African colonies the seeds are also known as *Café nègre* and *Café marron*. Botanically, the plant producing the seed is known as '*Cassia occidentalis*.' It grows very freely in most tropical countries; in fact, it is a common weed, with a sickly, offensive smell, that many planters would fain be rid of. The seeds are roasted and ground, and the infusion, made in the same way as ordinary coffee amazingly resembles the finest Mocha. This fact is confirmed by Dr Nicholls of Dominica, who, writing to the Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, a few years back, states: 'I collected some seeds, and directed my cook to roast and grind them, so that I might taste the "coffee." Other matters engaging my attention, I forgot the circumstance until several days afterwards, when, one evening, my wife inquired how I liked my after-dinner cup of coffee. I turned to her inquiringly, when she laughingly said: "That is your wild coffee." I was indeed surprised, for the coffee was indistinguishable from that made of the best Arabian beans, and we in Dominica are celebrated for our good coffee. Afterwards, some of the seeds, roasted and ground, were brought to me, and the aroma was equal to that of the coffee ordinarily used in the island.'

Dr Livingstone took some of these seeds to the Mauritius Botanical Gardens, and mentioned that the natives of tropical Africa roasted and used them like coffee.

It has not been definitely stated that the infusion has any stimulating effect, but it is only fair to suppose it has, otherwise the negroes would hardly employ it in lieu of coffee. Chemical analysis shows it to consist of fatty matters (olein and margarine), 4.9; tannic acid, 0.9; sugar, 2.1; gum, 28.8; starch, 2.0; cellulose, 34.0; water, 7.0; calcium sulphate, and phosphate, chrysophanic acid, 0.9; malic acid, sodium chloride, magnesium sulphate, iron, silica, together, 5.4; and achrosine, 13.58 parts in 100. Achrosine is soluble in water, and communicates to the latter a garnet colour. It contains carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, and sulphur; but its exact composition has not been determined. It is soluble also in alcohol and in acids and alkalis. The colour cannot be fixed upon tissues by any known mordant, and it is this circumstance that induced Professor Clouet, who made the analysis, to term it achrosine, or 'not colouring,' although being coloured itself.

If we might venture an hypothesis, we would suggest that further investigation into this colouring matter may prove that the colour is the important feature from an alimentary point of view. This has recently been proved to be the case with kola. For many years scientists were

puzzled as to the nature of the substance in the kola nut that produced the stimulating and nutritive effect. It was at first suggested that it was due to caffeine; but experiments proved that this was not the case. At length, after prolonged researches, Professor Heckel of Marseilles practically demonstrated that the 'muscle-bracing' and other beneficial properties of the kola nut were entirely due to the presence of a colouring body which he designated Kola Red ('rouge de kola'), and which a German scientist has since named Kolanin.

Besides using Fedegozo seeds as a substitute for coffee, the natives employ the whole plant as a remedial agent in various complaints and diseases. It is closely allied to ordinary senna—in fact, in Liberia, on the west coast of Africa, it is called small senna—so readers will not be surprised to learn that the whole plant is purgative. This is mainly attributable to the mucilaginous and extractive matters in conjunction with the small percentage of chrysophanic acid that analysis proves to be present in the plant. Torrefaction destroys the purgative principle in the seeds and causes them to taste like coffee.

One of the most useful properties of the plant is its febrifuge action. It is generally administered by boiling an ounce of the seed in ten ounces of water; and when this quantity is reduced to nine ounces, it is given to the patient during the cold period of a rigor; a profuse perspiration follows, and the rigors do not recur. The seeds have repeatedly been employed in France and in some West India Islands for this purpose; and instead of the decoction being used as just described, sixty grammes of the seed have been macerated in a litre of Malaga wine.

The value of the plant is recognised in all parts of the world. Mohammedan writers recommend its use in cases of coughs, especially whooping-coughs; an infusion of the root is considered by the American Indians to be an antidote against various poisons; and in Brazil the same preparation is used as a tonic and diuretic in dropsy and liver complaints. This latter property has gained for the plant the same unconventional title that country children apply to our own dandelion.

PROBATION.

It shall be mine, although I wait for it—
Wait while the sweet dawn broadens into day,
And let my longing eyes see, far away,
That land, my promised land—wait while I sit,
Wearied beneath the noontide glare, and suit
Almost to utter blindness—wait, till gray,
Between my eyes and it, the dim mists stray,
And over all the earth eve's shadows flit.
O throbbing heart, when thou hast learned to beat
With patient pulses—these sad eyes to shine
In fearless faith, and when my eager feet
Have ceased to choose their path—when e'en Love's
wine
Were bitter unless God have made it sweet,
Ah then—in that same hour—it shall be mine!

KATE MELLERSH.

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THE ETHICS OF HOTEL LIFE.

By MRS LYNN LINTON.

THE experienced know almost at a glance who is and who is not accustomed to Hotel Life. There is the same feeble helplessness of demeanour—the same lost and strayed air—the same kind of ‘Good gracious, what am I to do now, and what is going to happen next?’ which mark out the unaccustomed from the experienced, and give the latter the map of the country so soon as these others enter in at the door. The habits among themselves, too, of the unaccustomed betray them quite as much as their demeanour on first entering. There are certain who hold an hotel as no more public in the sense of self-restraint than their own home in the heart of the country. Have they acquired the bad habit of snap and snarl, of contradiction and interruption?—small check it is to them that strange and curious ears are listening to the familiar interludes which sound so bitter and are so futile! There is no malice, no real heart of sinful temper in these verbal scratchings. They mean no more than the stage combat—‘one, two, three, four, and cross over’—and their intimates take them at their full valuation. But strangers do not. Hence these two highly respectable and well-living citizens are set down as leading a cat-and-dog life, which they do not care to control even in public.

At the opposite end of the scale stand the unrestrained lovers—people who caress each other in public, call each other pet names sure to be of ludicrous complexion to strangers, and act generally as if no such thing as the dignity of reserve existed, and as if the sanctities of privacy were not different from the publicities of the market-place. These are the people who give each other choice bits or superfluous bits from their own plates; drink out of each other's glass; dispute amicably about the last teaspoonful of wine; and from start to finish act with the utmost unconcern as to appearances and the public verdict, thinking no more of their fellow-men than if they were two love-birds on a perch.

In a manner affiliated to these two types are the stand-off and the familiar—the people who look at you with a curiously supercilious air, as if questioning your pedigree, your upbringing, your business, your religious faith and political creed, and not by any means sure that the answers, if given, would be satisfactory. And there are the familiar, who call you ‘dear’ on the second interview, and before the third is out have confided to you their whole history—who they are and what they were, what their fathers died of, and how they lost their children, and anything else it may interest them to tell, to which you must make a show of sympathetic attention. Fortunately, these intimacies are like flowers without roots. They die as quickly as they are born, and their place knows them no more.

The unaccustomed are generally frightfully hard on the servants. They seem to consider the service of an hotel as a steady-going, unrelaxing automatic kind of thing, wherein the servants can never be tired, never want rest, never need to be absent from their posts for their own food or relaxation. It is a kind of ‘one down, another come on,’ to their mind. They do not realise the personality, the individuality, of any of the servants, but imagine that if one is tired another is there ready to take the work with the same automatic precision—the same minute attention to individual fads which persons of this sort demand from hotel servants. For this kind carries all its fads with it, and feels aggrieved if the chambermaid who has thirty rooms and their inmates to attend to, forgets this or mistimes that, bewildered as she is by the multiplicity of things to remember for those, unaccustomed, who treat an hotel as their private house, and themselves as the chief and principal of the whole affair.

Among these inconvenient inmates are the early risers. It is all very well to say that their servants are up every morning by six, and that six is as late as any well-conditioned domestic should be abed. The reasoning holds good for

those who go to bed at ten, and whose wildest vigils never stretch beyond eleven—those, too, who have had the whole evening and great part of the afternoon to themselves, when they might rest in tranquillity and gather enough strength for the next day's modest campaign. But for hotel servants—on their feet from seven till twelve, with no period of repose, not so much as a solitary half-hour they can call their own, things are different; and the abnormally early riser, demanding hot water, breakfast, what not, at inappropriate times, is a nuisance, and cruel at that. People who come to an hotel should come prepared to abandon a few of their own personal and special habits, and to conform to those which have been found best for the majority. Nowhere is that modern craze of 'individualism' more out of place than in a crowded hotel, where the smooth, the just, the humane working of things demands some amount of consideration from the visitors, and with this consideration a corresponding amount of giving up.

All sorts of characters meet you at the table-d'hôte, making a moral kaleidoscope as interesting and as infinite as is the material. There are the people who eat enormously, suggesting their determination to get their money's worth at all events. Come what may, they have paid for it, and they will have it. And there are people who pick and reject and grumble and find fault, with the air of the fastidiously accustomed who find nothing so good as that to which they have been used, and are for ever regretting their own cook and their own larder. And there are others so naively content with the horrible messes which come up under French names!—so touchingly sure that this is real French cookery, which they have heard of so often; and, dear me! now they have come across it, how good it is, and how far superior to our plain roast and boiled! With them are often children, who are encouraged to eat of everything that comes to table, and to eat without stint. If they do empty that whole dish of sweets, what harm? They are out in the open air all day long, and at such times as these it is well to enlarge the boundaries. What these small people manage to stow away in cheek pouches and supplementary stomachic store-closets not existing among the ordinary sons of men, is one of the marvels of hotel life. There it is, however; and it knocks the bottom out of all one's theories of what constitutes a proper dietary for the young, and of how much moral discipline should come into their education in the line of self-restraint as to appetites, fleshly and sensual. And speaking of children, too, a word has to be said in deprecation of the lax discipline and imperfect accommodation which makes the general drawing-room their nursery and playroom. Let them play and romp and dance and shout to their hearts' content, but let them have their own assigned recreation-room, wherein they can expand according to desire. To make the lives of the elder portion of the community unendurable by reason of the 'wild huzzas and cruel noise' so delightful to youth—so distracting to age—is an unfair division. Let the one be happy in its own glad noisy restless way; but let the other have peace, and the quietude without which is infinite suffering.

The windows are the grand battle-ground of

differences in age and constitution. There shiver the poor old goodies whom bronchitis catches by the throat if but the keen wind looks too sharply through the closed windows. There flush the radiant young and the many-fleshed mature, who fan themselves at Christmas-time and cannot exist with closed windows winter or summer, night or day—who enjoy a draught, and call a keen north-easter jolly. And who, pray, is to decide between them? As a rule the young have it, and the poor old goodies suffer. Here, rheumatic pains are increased and the stiff walk becomes a decided hobble. There, the old familiar enemy swoops down on the helpless victim and chokes him with worse than desert-sand. Then a week's spell in bed, with doctor and drugs and so much loss of time and enjoyment, makes the practical comment on the wisdom of sitting in a draught with a keen wind racing through the window to the door. The same thing goes on in the drawing-room, which the children use as a passage-place into the garden, with the necessary result of cold shivers down sensitive backs, and catarrhs of various kinds and different locations. But the old and frail have the worst of it, inasmuch as pains and sickness are worse than 'stuffiness' and discomfort.

Of the company, what an infinite variety! There are the badly dressed—men who slouch down to dinner in knickerbockers and a Norfolk jacket, and women who wear crumpled collars and faded blouses. And there are the full-dressed, who make the mixed crowd of a second-rate hotel occasion for display in fine linen and diamond studs—bare shoulders, rich velvet, much jewellery, and an air of ballroom elegance. There are the free and the frightened—men whose hail-fellow-well-met kind of advances you have to resist; and timid girls, who could not answer you 'yes' or 'no' if you spoke to them, which in very pity you do not. There are the emphatic Nobodies who come from small provincial towns, and are flustered and excited at this their deeper draught of life; and there are the Somebodies, as yet anonymous, who come into the room with that air of distinction unmistakable and not to be gainsaid. They may be homely in feature, insignificant in person, by no means taking—but they are Somebodies. That stands out as plainly as the dome of St Peter's, and you seize the subtle announcement on their first entrance into the room. By-and-by you find how right your prognostic was, and are perhaps startled by the breadth and weight of this Somebody's repute. Sometimes these lions are humane and modest-mannered enough. Sometimes they are terribly the reverse, and can only be appeased by being induced to roar while fed with cakes of flattery and attention. And sometimes even they, great as they are, are served with the very cheese-parings of renown; when that benighted citizen says doubtfully, 'Don't know the name. What is he? What has he done?' Or some less imperfect if more entangled critic pronounces joyfully: 'Oh, he is Mr So-and-so, and he wrote that beautiful book of poems, don't you know?' But, unfortunately for the critic, he never wrote a line in his life, save, perhaps, the titles of his pictures for the R. A.; or haply his hypothetical book of poems was a successful play, or a novel that made its mark, or maybe only a book of philosophy, more widely talked

about than read, and less understood than discussed.

Many and many more types we must leave out of our gallery. The people who gather all the good things to themselves and their own party, and revel in abundance while others have nothing—what a well-known hotel type that is! So are the good-natured souls who are always willing to share their advantages, and who look after your little extra wants as if you were at their own homes. The people who—with a party of Irish priests at that table there in the corner, Home Rulers to a man as they are—sound the tocsin of the Union loud enough for all the room to hear. The rowdy sons and daughters of the Bank Holiday yesterday, who, at breakfast, sing, shout, let off little sharp screams mingled with gurgles of laughter, pull crackers, and generally comfort themselves as 'Arrys and 'Arriets are wont to do. The people who slip by the servants, or scamp the tips when they cannot save them altogether, on the futile plea, 'Attendance charged for in the bill'; and the people who know that tips are expected, are part of the provisions of the place, and that no one who really respected himself would dream of 'bilking' the servants, as of old the scamps of the road used to 'bilk the pikeman.' The people who practise their scales, and play with humdrum fidelity for the stipulated two hours every day—or the piano is 'sick' and under a physician in the shape of a tuner with a plentiful supply of catgut in his pocket. These and more we encounter in an hotel, where also we meet the lovely and the genuine, the gentle, the refined, the unassuming, the enchanting. In any case, an hotel is a microcosm where we stumble against oddities of various kinds. And all this time we have left those ethics alone!—those ethics which can be compressed into a single sentence—the briefest word of advice. 'Remember, an hotel is not home; nor are strangers your own familiars; nor, in a crowd, can you claim the special indulgences rightfully due to the one and the other.' The law of hotel life is consideration for others; and the purest form of socialism we have yet accomplished is to be found in a public drawing-room and at a table-d'hôte.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XVII.

A tone which is now for ever fled;
A hope which is now for ever past;
A love so sweet it could not last,
Was time long past.

SHELLEY.

'Has Mr Ludlow come home yet?'

'No, Missy; but I'm expecting him every minute.'

'But if he had come by the train he fixed, he would have been here an hour ago.'

The old man smiled. 'I think I can guess pretty well what he's doing. He's gone round by Burlington House just to have a look at his picture.—Bless your heart, he was so terrible took up with his Pomona, he could hardly bear to part with her. When the cab came to the door to take it to the Academy, I think he'd two

minds about letting it go, even on the chance of its not being hung. I've known amany painting gentlemen, and they're all a deal took up with their own pictures, though some of them hides it more than others; but I never saw one so downright wrope up as him; and he've stuck a fancy price on it, so as no one shant buy it.—But come in, Missy, and I'll fetch up the tea. He'll be here in a—— Bless my heart!' Warren ended in a bewildered whisper, 'whoever is that young lady? I seem to know her face pretty near as well as I do yours.'

'It is my cousin, Miss Lester,' Sage said; 'but I don't think you can have seen her before.'

The whisper had not been lost on Pomona, and both she and Sage enjoyed the mystification of the old man; and the puzzled looks he stole at her as he spread the little tea-table in the studio, making excuses to come again and again to re-arrange the tea-things or bring an extra plate or teaspoon; and once Sage caught him standing staring with a plate of biscuits in his hand, from which, in his abstraction, an avalanche was descending on to the floor.

Pomona was examining with interest all the pretty artistic things with which the studio—unlike that of Owen Ludlow's at Scar—was adorned. A studio was quite as great a novelty to her as a shabby, little house in Dalston; and both one and the other struck her as intensely interesting, and something fresh and outside the conventional limits within which the lines of her life had hitherto been cast.

To Sage it was all familiar; but perhaps no less interesting than it was to Pomona, as association took the place of novelty with even more powerful charm; and where Pomona saw richly coloured Oriental tapestry, Sage saw the background to a picturesque figure; and where Pomona exclaimed over a Venetian mirror with quaint embossed silver frame, Sage could echo the admiration, seeing in it the dark handsome face and smiling eyes it had so often reflected. That bronze Mercury was beautiful and graceful, as Pomona said; but the beauty and grace were entirely associated with Maurice, saying before he went away in the winter: 'I wish I had winged heels like this chappie to bring me to my lady-love.'

There were not many pictures about; but Pomona was looking at some canvases standing with their faces to the wall in a corner, when the sputtering, spitting, little silver kettle on the tea-table called Sage away to make the tea; and while she was doing it, Pomona gave an exclamation of recognition.

'Sage, I am sure I have seen this man.—Oh yes; of course it is a Mr Moore I met at Mrs Coppleston's dinner. He told me he knew Mr Ludlow; indeed, it was he who first told me anything about him. It is only a sketch, but it is very good.'

Sage spilt some of the hot water on her finger, suddenly startled by hearing Maurice's name.

'Look,' Pomona went on—'do you know him?'

'Yes, a little.' It was no doubt the scalded finger that sent the rush of colour over Sage's delicate face and neck; and Pomona was eager in her sympathy and wish to do something to alleviate the pain, though Sage declared it was

nothing at all to trouble about, and would be all right in a minute.

Just then they heard a cab stop and the sounds of an arrival, a portmanteau slammed down in the hall, and Ludlow's voice talking to the cabman, and Warren's voice informing him that Miss Sage was there and another young lady; and then Ludlow's step sounded along the passage. He came in through the other room that opened into the studio, where he and Dr Merridew had sat on Christmas Eve, and Sage went forward to meet him.

'Well, little friend,' he said in his usual hearty, cheery voice—'well, this is a pleasant welcome. Where's'— And then, behind Sage, he saw Pomona, and the words died on his lips.

She was standing full in the light, looking towards him with a grave, shy look, that—Sage thought with a slight sense of disappointment—was less like the picture than the radiant, bright look that was more usual to her. Sage did not know how wonderfully more like it made Pomona to Katharine, the young wife whose sweet eyes had closed on this life twenty years ago.

Owen Ludlow still held Sage's hand in his affectionate greeting, and Sage felt his hand grip hers with a sudden, painful pressure, and saw that his face had turned an ashy sort of white. It had not occurred to her till then that the likeness to the picture meant also the likeness to the dead wife, who was so living a memory in his heart; and she wished now that she had prepared him for it.

'This is Miss Lester,' she said quickly—'my cousin, Pomona Lester.'

He had recovered himself in a moment, and came forward with something of his usual courteous manner. 'I am very pleased to make Miss Lester's acquaintance. I am sorry to have been delayed in returning; and I hope Jervis has done the honours and brought you some tea.'

Sage fancied there was an unnaturally stiff tone in his voice, and a cold look in his eyes, almost of aversion, as he looked at Pomona, who, on her side, had a little touch of haughtiness in her manner, and an elegant, chill formality that had been conspicuous by its absence before, every look and movement and tone having seemed so wonderfully simple and natural and unconscious.

Sage was uncomfortably aware that this introduction was not a success—that these two friends of hers were not getting on and did not take to one another. She could see, with Pomona's eyes, that Mr Ludlow without his sympathetic, kindly manner was not attractive; while, with his, she could see Pomona as a fashionable young lady, giving herself haughty, fine-lady airs. She could not tell the other feelings that were surging within him, and had to be kept rigidly down by that stiff, rather over-polite manner, which Sage dreadfully feared Pomona might consider bad form.

She did not know that when Ludlow's hand touched Pomona's, he felt a tiny baby's purposeless clasp that had folded round one of his fingers twenty years ago, as he stooped to kiss a warm, little forehead among the folds of a big, white shawl. She did not know Pomona's eyes were really Katharine's looking across those twenty years at him with silent reproach. She did not

know how, after the first shock, followed by a desperate effort to disbelieve in the girl's identity, and assure himself that the likeness was purely accidental, that very likeness had been hateful and repugnant to him; the tone of her voice, an echo of the melody of that sweet honey-moon year, jarred and stung him; the curve of her cheek and line of her brow irritated and filled him with a sort of resentment; the very position in which her slim hands lay in her lap fretted him almost beyond endurance.

Pomona, on her side, felt repelled and disappointed. Maurice Moore had spoken so warmly of the painter; Sage had sung his praises so heartily; she had been so interested in his studio, and naturally she was much more inclined to like than to dislike people. In all her sunny, happy life, she had hardly ever met with any one to dislike, having one of those natures that see the best in every one, and so her whole world was inhabited by nice, pleasant, interesting people. It is a blessed gift to be born with, this quality of seeing the best. I hardly think a fairy god-mother could give a better, happier gift to a child in any rank of life. Oh yes; no doubt they will be constantly taken in, constantly disappointed; but that is infinitely better than to live in a dreary world, seeing only the low motives, bad disposition, meanness, and selfishness that are no doubt only too conspicuous in most of us, though, thank Heaven, not unmixed in any of us.

But Pomona's feeling for Mr Ludlow amounted almost to dislike, and being such a very unusual sensation with her, it fretted her, and made her uncomfortable, and she was glad to take her leave as soon as politeness allowed.

Nothing was said of her likeness to the picture. Owen Ludlow talked hard and heavily on society subjects in which he was not at all *au fait*, and Pomona answered with hardly veiled indifference. Sage vainly tried to make things run more easily and pleasantly, and it was a relief to all when Pomona declared she must go.

She wanted to take Sage back; but Mr Ludlow would not hear of it, declaring that was his privilege; and while he went to see if the carriage was there, Sage said: 'You don't know how nice he can be.'

'I am sure he can be very nice to you, dear; but I don't think he would to me. He doesn't like me.'

'Oh, Pomona!'

'I don't mind a bit, dear, little Sage, as long as you like me, and I am sure you do.—When will you come and see me? And what day shall we go down to Beechfield together and see mother? Come to-morrow morning and have lunch with me?—No! too busy? Well, I will write. I am so, so glad we have met.'

And then the painter returned and ceremoniously escorted Miss Lester to her carriage.

'Are you ill?' Sage asked anxiously as the painter came back into the studio.

He was walking very slowly, and his head was bent, and his shoulders stooped like an old man, and his face had a drawn look on it as of suffering.

'No, little friend, not ill, only old and tired, and not up, as you may perceive, to fashionable society. I didn't know you had such fine rela-

tions, Sage—and yet, I think your father told me once of a cousin.'

'I never saw her till to-day.—Oh, Mr Ludlow, don't you think she is lovely?'

He paused a minute, and then said with cold impartiality: 'Yes, perhaps she would be considered so.'

'But don't you think so?'

'Well, I am not sure.'

He was moody and absent; and Sage hardly knew if he were listening to her description of Pomona's sudden appearance that afternoon, and how sweet and cordial she was, and how she wanted her, Sage, to go down with her to Beechfield to see 'my aunt, Lady Lester.'

I do not think one need call it snobbishness the pleasure those last words gave to Sage; or if it were so, it was snobbishness of a very simple elementary sort, not unnatural in a girl who, till that afternoon, had thought of titles as belonging to people in books and newspapers, not to any one in ordinary life, certainly not life in Dalston.

She was longing to tell it all to Maurice; it was such a gratification to think that her relations would bear comparison with his; it had always rather afflicted her that Maurice's friends and relations should be in a higher station than hers; and if she had not loved him so, the feeling of condescension on his part would soon have become galling. I think it was this that made her shrink a little from descriptions of any society he went into, which shrinking had led to her hearing hardly anything of the dinner party at the Copplestons at which Maurice had met Pomona. But now that it would be give and take, she would like to hear all about his friends, and would not even mind being introduced to them; and, by-and-by, she would tell Pomona of their engagement, and take Maurice to see her, and, perhaps, to the beautiful place at Beechfield, and to 'my aunt, Lady Lester.'

I have said that in old days at Scar these two friends had no scruple in relapsing into silence when thoughts grave or gay absorbed them; and so now Sage's thoughts were roaming away; while perhaps Owen Ludlow's were as far from the studio and the present, only his were wandering into the past, sad and gray, while hers were venturing into the rose-coloured future.

'I think,' he said at last, drawing his hand wearily over his forehead and eyes—'I think I shall go back to Scar to-morrow.'

CARVED IVORIES.

THE subject of Carved Ivory forms one of the most important branches of the industrial arts, for from extant examples the art may be traced from prehistoric to the present times, and specimens of carvings made by all peoples in all ages may be seen in the public museums and collections. Owing, probably, to the little intrinsic value of ivory, many specimens have been preserved, it being a substance of little or no value for turning into bullion, so much needed for the successful carrying on of the wars of the middle ages; many specimens also were preserved and hidden, owing to their portability and small size.

At the present time, when so many vegetable substances are being used in the place of ivory, it is as well that the nature and characteristics of true ivory should be stated. If a section were to be taken and carefully examined, there would be observed series of lines proceeding from a common centre in arcs of circles, also that these arcs intersected one another and formed minute diamond-shaped spaces. In its strictest sense, true ivory is confined to that kind of tooth-substance which shows such diamond or lozenge shaped spaces.

The chief source of ivory is that obtained from the elephants of Africa and Asia. Ivory so obtained may be distinguished, owing to the African when first cut exhibiting hardly any grain, being first of a transparent tint, afterwards becoming lighter in colour. Asiatic when first cut is like African which has been cut for some time, but becomes yellow by exposure to light. The African has a closer texture, and is capable of being more highly polished than the Asiatic variety. Beside elephant ivory, other substances have been largely used in the carving of the middle ages, notably walrus, narwhal, and hippopotamus ivory. It is interesting to note that King Olthert of Norway visited King Alfred the Great in 890 A.D., after a walrus hunt in the North Sea, one of the objects of which was the obtaining of walrus ivory. Another very important source of ivory is that obtained from the Mammoth, the extinct *Elephas primigenius*. Large quantities of this ivory have been found in the frozen soils of Siberia, it being said that nearly all the turned ivory-work of Russia has been made from this so-called fossil ivory. These extinct elephants from which it is obtained have been immured in the frozen soil for countless centuries. In prehistoric times herds of these animals roamed over Western Europe.

The very earliest carvings now extant are those found in the caves of Le Moustier and La Madelaine, preserved at Paris, bearing representations of animals as seen by the prehistoric men. Amongst others are an ibex, a reindeer coming to a stream to drink, and perhaps the most important is an incised carving of the Mammoth, showing the long curved tusks and the shaggy mane, such as none of the present species possess.

Many centuries elapse between the prehistoric ivories and those to which any approximate date can be assigned. As in regard to other of the industrial arts, so in regard to that of carved ivory the earliest mention is referred to Egypt; a tablet of the twelfth or Theban dynasty (c. 2020 B.C.) gives directions for the making of a small statuette, parts of which were to be of ebony and parts of ivory.

In the British Museum are various chairs and other articles decorated with ivory, to which have been assigned dates varying from the eighteenth to the tenth centuries B.C., notably two daggers

with plain uncarved ivory handles dating from the eighteenth or seventeenth century B.C.

One of the most interesting series of all the objects found at Nineveh was a very valuable collection of about three hundred carved ivories, probably made between the ninth and eighth centuries B.C. They were discovered by Sir Henry Layard in a room, possibly the Treasury of the North-west Palace; and when found, were in a very brittle condition, owing to the fatty substances of which ivory is partly formed having decomposed. When brought to England, they were boiled in gelatine. As a consequence, they again became to a certain extent solid, and were placed (and are now to be seen) in the British Museum. Amongst the largest specimens, certain plaques with representations of Egyptian monarchs are finely carved. A very large number of small pieces consisted probably of the frieze placed round some valuable chest or coffer. Amongst other portions to be seen are some few which have small cells cut out of the ivory, and into which have been let portions of lapis lazuli and gold, the largest of this kind of work being a piece which is stated to have formed a part of a throne. In the Old Testament it is said that Solomon made a throne of ivory and overlaid it with the best gold. Since these Nineveh ivories were probably made about the time of Solomon, and very likely in or near the same place where the throne of Solomon was carved, might there not now be seen in this piece in the British Museum a part of a throne similar to the one made for the Temple at Jerusalem?

Ivory is referred to in the Bible. The ivory house which Ahab made is stated to have been one of his memorable acts. In the prophets, mention is made of 'benches of ivory brought out of the Isles of Chittim,' 'horns of ivory' and beds of ivory. On a black marble obelisk brought from Assyria, and now in the British Museum, slaves are represented as carrying elephants' tusks; as also similar representations are to be seen upon the bas-reliefs of the ruined palace of Darius and Xerxes at Persepolis.

In the sixth century B.C. the towns of Sicyon and Argos were noted for their ivory statues; and in the year 600, the Cypselidae sent as an offering to Olympia a chest of ivory and gold. About 490 B.C. the very large chryselephantine statues made by Phidias and his contemporaries are noted. These statues, which were made partly of ivory and partly of gold, were of all sizes, ranging up to fifty-eight feet in height. It is very difficult to know how the ancients could have obtained such large pieces of ivory necessary for the making of these statues; and many theories in regard to it have been formed. Some think that the ivory was welded together in a way unknown now; others, that large plaques were hung on or fastened to an inner core, and the joinings carefully concealed, somewhat similar to the way by which the Battersea enamellers in later times concealed fire-flaws and cracks on their finest pieces of work by painting sprays of flowers over these cracks.

It would seem probable that the flesh-parts which were exposed to view were of ivory, whilst the dress was of gold. Of all these statues, the two most important were the figure of Minerva, which was placed in the Parthenon, and was

forty feet high; and that of Jupiter, placed in the temple of Zeus, at Olympia, and fifty-eight feet high. These statues, which were seen and described by the old writers of the early centuries before and after Christ, were destroyed by the fanaticism of the early Christians.

Very few ivories carved before the time of the Emperor Constantine (272 to 337 A.D.) are in existence. Most of the larger European museums possess one or two specimens; the South Kensington Museum has two such—one, a portion of a sacrificial cup; the other, one leaf of a diptych bearing the name of 'Symmachorum' incised upon it.

The subject of diptychs and triptychs is a very interesting one in connection with ivory. Anything doubled or doubly folded may be called a diptych; and should it consist of three parts, the two outer leaves of which fold over and enclose the central one, the object would be a triptych. During the early centuries before and after Christ, it was customary to use diptychs and tablets for writing purposes; the outside would be made of wood, bone, or ivory; the inner surface being hollowed out and coated with wax, which latter was scratched upon with a stylus. Two small diptychs with characters scratched upon the wax were found a few years ago in a gold mine in Transylvania, and from the words upon them it is known that they were made in 169 A.D.

When a person was elected consul under the Roman Empire, it became customary for him to send presents to the senators, high state officials, and other friends. These presents were very costly; and amongst others sent were ivory diptychs, upon the outsides of which would be generally carved a representation of the consul himself seated in his curule chair and attired in his official robes. In a lower compartment would be carved representations of the games with which the consul would inaugurate his year of office. Inside, the wax was inscribed with the names of the preceding consuls, finishing with that of the donor. At the present time, twenty-one distinct examples of these consular diptychs, as they are called, are in existence, some of which may be seen in the British and South Kensington Museums, and at Liverpool, Milan, Darmstadt, Berlin, Paris, &c., and date from the third to the sixth centuries A.D., and are chiefly of Byzantine workmanship.

A second class of ivory diptychs are those known as 'Non-consular,' generally having been made for some special purpose, and often of very great beauty. Among others may be mentioned that of Æsculapius and Hygeia, now at Liverpool; and the Tablet of Sens at Paris. But perhaps one of the finest ever sculptured is a single leaf of a diptych previously mentioned, inscribed 'Symmachorum,' the other leaf, much damaged, being in the Cluny Museum, Paris. The two leaves originally formed the doors of a reliquary at Moustier, in France, probably being used for that purpose some time in the eighth century. As a diptych, they may have contained the marriage contract between members of the Nicomachus and Symmachus family, the names inscribed upon each leaf.

In the British Museum, one of the largest carved ivories in existence is a diptych leaf of

Byzantine origin, sixteen and a half inches long and five and a half inches wide.

In the seventh and eighth centuries, possessors of diptychs presented them to the Church, and then, instead of containing the names of the consuls, they enclosed the names of persons who should be prayed for, the lists being read out at mass. A few such diptychs still exist, and are classified and known as 'Ecclesiastical.'

A very important work in ivory in the sixth century A.D. was a chair made for the Archbishop of Ravenna (546-556), and now preserved among the treasures of the cathedral at Ravenna. At the end of the sixth century and early in the seventh century, there was a decline in art in Italy, but at the same time there was a revival in Eastern Europe; and plaques of ivory carved at this and later periods in and about that region are to be seen in museums, and are classified as 'Byzantine.' About the year 750, a bitter struggle commenced in reference to the use of images not only as used in churches but in private life, and under Leo the Isaurian the fanatics obtained great power. To the rage of these iconoclasts, the wholesale destruction of antique monuments and sculpture must be assigned.

Charlemagne, who at this period (812 A.D.) was the great potentate in Western Europe, sent a Commissioner to Greece to inquire into the persecutions, and at the same time to invite any persons who so wished to come and live under his sway. Many journeyed to Western Europe, and at the same time brought with them objects of art, by means of which examples the workers of the West were enabled to improve their arts, and among others, their ivory carvings. Works made during the period ranging to 972 A.D. are classified together and are known as 'Carlovingian.'

From about the year 870 to 972 A.D., Europe was much disturbed by wars, which, together with the prevailing idea that the end of the world was to take place in 1000 A.D., caused a great decline in all the arts.

In 972 the Emperor Otto II. of Germany was married to the Greek Princess Théophanie, who when she came to Germany brought with her workers skilled in the arts of Greece. These workers were settled in the towns bordering on the Rhine; and objects made by these people, their pupils, and descendants, which show a style somewhat Byzantine in form, but at the same time with Western faces and other parts differing from those made solely in Greece, are classified together and are known as 'Rhenish Byzantine.' Although there was again a decline in art generally in Western Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, yet the arts were to a great extent fostered and protected in the fortified towns of the Rhine district; and of all the art objects made in the twelfth century, few can compare with two reliquaries made at Siegburg, each in the form of a Greek church, around which are placed statuettes of the prophets, Christ and the disciples; and at the ends of the transepts, carved plaques. The larger of the two is the property of the nation, and is to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, and has an interesting history connected with it. For many centuries it was preserved in the Abbey of Hoch Elten, near Emmerich, until the French Revolu-

tion of last century, when the Abbey was sacked. Rather than allow such a precious object to be stolen, the Abbess took it away and hid it in the chimney of a neighbouring house. A few years later it came into the possession of a priest at Dornich, who sold it for eleven pounds; the buyer again sold it to Prince Salm for thirty pounds, who in his turn sold it to a dealer for one thousand pounds; the latter disposing of it to Prince Soltykoff, at the sale of whose collection it was purchased for the nation for £2142; and if the price lately paid for an enamelled hunting horn, namely, £6615, may be taken as a guide, it would probably fetch almost a like sum.

As in regard to all the arts, so in regard to ivory, a great renaissance took place in Western Europe in the fourteenth century. Gothic architecture was well known, and was made to serve as a model for carved ivory diptychs. Many such are to be seen divided into compartments representing Gothic arches with trefoils and quatre-foils, under which arches religious subjects were carved. Many other objects now became carved in ivory, such as chessmen, combs, draughts, caskets, mirror cases, pastoral staves, 'taus'—the earlier form of pastoral staves—oliphants or tenure horns, and statues chiefly of the religious kind. In the seventeenth century, some very fine vases were made of turned ivory by Fil. Senger, turner to Cosimo III., Grand-duke of Tuscany.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, various sculptors in ivory were engaged in carving portions of tusks with classical and other subjects, which were afterwards mounted in silver or silver-gilt by some of the finest Augsburg and Nuremberg workers, and formed vases and tankards. In the eighteenth century, various carvings in ivory were made chiefly of statuettes and small plaques, but none attain to the excellence of the earlier carvings. In modern times, the ivory carvings of India have become noted for their minute and delicate work. In China and Japan, ivory has been carved, the ivory balls enclosed inside one another being specially noted. Many theories have been formed as to how these balls have been cut; perhaps a probable one is that a ball of ivory was taken, around the upper and lower ends of which four small holes were carved out, gradually diminishing in size towards the centre until the axis of the one hole met the axis of the other or lower one at right angles in the centre of the ball; and that then small tools were inserted, and a thin layer of ivory, forming a part of a circle from one hole to its lower corresponding one, was cut and loosened from the whole mass; and so gradually cutting from one hole to the next one, a complete inner circle was eventually loosened, the circles themselves afterwards being cut into the required pattern.

Attempts have been made to forge old ivories and pass them off as genuine old ones. In 1862 a copy of a leaf of a consular diptych was made from an old engraving which Wilhelm had made of it in 1659, and had been offered to and accepted by a continental museum as an original object. An English expert who was shown the forgery at once stated that the original was in the South Kensington Museum, and advised the authorities to take it out of its frame and examine

its back and to look for the writing which had been placed there in the eighth century. Needless to say, no writing was visible, and the forgery was at once detected.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DESERT.

CHAPTER III.

THE return of the eldest son and heir to the station created the usual amount of gossip in the district. Alf kept up the character he had first assumed of careless liberality, and did not interfere with Robert's management. He soon renewed his intimacy with the Rudders, and, as was but natural, became a devoted admirer of Kate's. On her part, it was only to be supposed that she should feel interested in him. He had plenty to talk about that had a certain charm of novelty; his adventures during the Zulu War and in the outside districts of Australia were told without boasting, and soon served to put him on a small heroic pedestal in the community.

As may be presumed, this intimacy with the Rudders was not at all to Robert's liking; and both men felt that it was, after all, but a hollow truce between them, and one that might be ruptured at any moment. Kate Rudder had no thought of arousing the younger brother's jealousy by treating the elder so intimately. She sincerely liked Robert, and it only wanted a word from him to awaken a warmer feeling.

Unfortunately, it was different with Alf. He had fallen head over ears in love with Kate, and felt certain that it was returned. It was evident that such a state of things could not go long without an explosion of some sort. Blanche had long guessed Robert's secret, and was prepared to become an active ally, should the turn of affairs necessitate it.

The smothered feud broke out one night when the two men were smoking a pipe before retiring.

'I intend to try my luck to-morrow,' said Alf. 'It's time I settled down and got married.'

'I quite agree with you,' returned Robert, somewhat meaningly. 'Where are you going to condescend to throw the handkerchief?'

'Oh, don't put on side. You know very well that I am going to ask Kate Rudder, and have every reason to suppose she will say yes.'

'It's a lie!' replied Bob furiously, a sudden gust of passion completely overcoming him.

Alf started, but checked himself. 'I can afford to laugh at you,' he said. 'Rave away; it won't whistle your sweetheart back.'

'If you put your boast to the test to-morrow,' said Robert, in a calmer tone, 'you will find yourself mistaken. I should advise you to stay at home.'

'Keep your advice to yourself, and don't provoke me,' said the other, who was now in his turn losing his temper.

'Provoke you, indeed!' repeated Robert contemptuously.

'Yes, you beggar, or I'll soon get rid of you.'

'As you did Sam?'

Alf leaped to his feet, speechless with a mix-

ture of rage and fear. Next minute, the two men would have been at each other's throats, but the door opened, and Blanche entered. 'I heard your voices raised,' she said, affecting not to notice their menacing attitudes: 'what are you quarrelling about?'

'Oh, we never could agree of old,' said Robert, trying to calm himself as his sister approached him.

'Look here, my fine fellow,' said Alf; 'to-morrow you take yourself, bag and baggage, out of this; and just see that your accounts are square when I come to overhaul them.'

Robert's face turned fiery red; but Blanche caught his hand. 'If Bob goes, I go too,' she said.

'You are quite welcome,' returned Alf, who had completely dropped the mask.

'I will give you full satisfaction about the station accounts to-morrow morning,' said Robert; 'and in a short time I trust you will be able to give an equally satisfactory account of what I shall require from you?'

'What do you mean?' demanded the other fiercely.

'Simply, I do not believe your version of your trip out west. I will see what Burgess has to say in the matter.'

'You will have to go to another place than Queensland, then, for he is dead.'

'Oh, you knew that, did you? And yet you pretended to ask after him.'

'Pshaw! I will not stop to listen to any more nonsense. To-morrow, I will show you who is master here.' He left the room.

The brother and sister had a long conversation, during which, for the first time, Robert told her about the buried papers and what he suspected of their import. Blanche was naturally horrified, and reiterated her now fixed determination to leave on the following day. Robert impressed upon her the necessity of absolute secrecy; and they were about parting, when she asked him where he was going to when he left. For herself, she was going on a visit to an aunt for a while.

'I am going to the Northern Territory of South Australia to look for Jim Turner,' he said.

As he spoke, he had his hand on the door, and half opened it. A noise outside struck his ear, and he threw it wide open, and looked along the passage. A dark shadow vanished at the end as he did so, and it immediately occurred to him that Alf had been listening.

'Forewarned is forearmed,' he thought as he retired. 'I must guard against Master Alf getting any inkling of those papers, or he will be beforehand with me.' Then he thought that if Alf had been listening, he would have heard all he confided to Blanche; but on second consideration, he remembered that they had spoken low, all but the last words referring to Jim Turner, and it would be hard to trace anything from that.

Blanche had given her brother a hint that he had better test his fate with Kate Rudder as soon as practicable, and he determined to do it the first thing in the morning, if possible before he settled up with his brother. With this object in view he was up at daylight, and by sunrise was

on his way, calculating that he would arrive at the Rudders' station in time for breakfast. He managed to hit the meal very nicely; and while seated thereat, he informed his friends of his resignation, or rather deposition, in favour of his eldest brother. As the terms on which the two men stood were pretty well known, this intimation did not surprise anybody. It elicited, however, a quick glance of sympathy from Kate, which was sufficient satisfaction for Robert. He soon made an opportunity to ask the momentous question. As two ships converge towards each other in mid-ocean on a calm day, so the wooing and the wooed have a silent occult speech of their own which is better than any outspoken language, and serves just as well to convey the intended meaning. In the old nursery and schoolroom, now turned into a lonely kind of lumber-room, seldom visited, Kate and Robert plighted their troth; and then he departed with a light heart to seek the consent of her parent. Old Rudder half expected what was coming; and Robert was delighted to find that the return of the rightful heir did not affect his suit. The fact was that Rudder had seen enough of him and his management during the past ten years to feel assured that young Patten was one of the men bound to rise, and that the present would be merely a temporary eclipse.

The fifteen miles home—home no longer—were soon covered, and he entered the house to find his half-brother waiting for him. To his surprise, Alf approached him in the sunniest manner possible. 'Look here, old man,' he said; 'we shall always be snarling at each other, I suppose, as long as we are together; but let us have a try to do better in future at any rate. I will take back anything I said last night, if you will do the same.'

'I have made up my mind to go away and strike out for myself,' returned Robert, after a pause. 'As you admit, we should always be quarrelling; so it is best to part. I am glad it is not in anger, and am willing to forget the hasty words exchanged last night.'

'I suppose that is as much as I can expect from you,' replied the other. 'Go or stay, I shall not quarrel with you.'

After a hasty packing-up, Robert and his sister started in a buggy to the neighbouring township of W—, whence they would take the train to Sydney, where Robert intended to leave Blanche with their aunt.

Meanwhile, Alf went headlong to his fate. He had determined to propose to Kate Rudder, and rode over that day for the purpose. What he then learned did not improve his temper. He rode home in a mood of sullen spite, revolving in his mind the best way to obtain his own will and thwart his rival.

Robert wrote a short but explicit letter to Owen, the manager of Bendabar, on whom he thought he could rely, asking him to observe the strictest reticence concerning the buried papers and their whereabouts, and if any one turned up inquiring for them, to put the seeker, if possible, on a false scent. He further took him into his confidence concerning the return of the elder brother, supposed to be dead; and also told him of his purposed quest for Turner, who seemed to be the only man who could point out

the hiding-place. He then made a hasty trip to W— to say good-bye to his sweetheart, and started ostensibly to look for a suitable pastoral investment; in reality, he took the first steamer for Port Darwin.

A long narrow clearing through a dense scrub of upright 'mulga.' In the centre of this cleared track runs a row of telegraph poles, supporting a single wire, the slender link that traverses the Australian Continent from north to south, and binds it with an almost living bond to the rest of the world. At the edge of this thicket of mulga is a patch of open country, thinly timbered with coolibah trees. Here, alongside the rude dray-track that winds side by side with the line, are a couple of iron tanks, each containing about four hundred gallons of water, tanks such as are used on board of sailing-ships. A line-repairing party are camped on this open spot; and the tanks are kept full for the use of the men employed in the maintenance of the line. There are three men in the camp—an operator and two line-men; it is the middle of the day, and they are taking it easy in the shade; their riding and pack horses, hobbled out, are feeding a short distance away.

'Here comes the man they were telling us about when we spoke* Daly Waters Station,' suddenly remarked the operator, gazing up the long northern vista of the line.

'The man who is in search of Jim?' said one of the men, glancing at the third, who looked rather conscious.

Jim, who was the long-sought-for Jim Turner, busied himself in putting the fire together and placing a quart pot of water on to boil, for hospitality is the sacred creed of the bush; and the party were silent until the stranger rode up to the camp and dismounted.

'I suppose you are the repairing party from Daly Waters?' said the new-comer, after the customary greetings.

'Yes,' returned the operator; 'and I presume you are the man they wired to me about, looking for Jim Turner. This is Turner;' and he indicated the man in question.

The two nodded; and Patten—for it was Robert—remarked: 'I have had a long hunt for you. I suppose you are wondering what it is all about?'

'Better turn your horses out and have something to eat,' interrupted the operator; 'plenty of time for business afterwards.'

Patten accepted the invitation; and after eating his meal and finishing the regulation pipe, drew Turner on one side and broached the object of his visit.

'You were stockman on Bendabar,' he said, 'and were with Mr Hopwood when you picked up Burgess.'—Turner assented.—'The fact is simply this. You left Burgess to rest down there, while you went up to the station, got fresh horses, and came down again. While you were away, he buried certain papers he had, enclosing

* The operators on the overland line who are in charge of repairing parties carry small pocket instruments, which they can attach to the main wire by light wires, and thus converse with the stations north and south.

them in an old salmon tin that he picked up there. He is dead now; but before he died, he wrote and told me of these papers, giving me directions to find them by means of the marked trees about. I went to the place; but it is now all changed. The trees have been cut down; and a heavy flood has altered the appearance and size of the water-holes in the river. No one on the station knew the exact place; and as the clue he had given me was useless, my only chance was to find Hopwood or yourself; so I advertised in the leading papers.' Patten paused.

'I never knew of the advertisement until the other day,' said Turner; 'and then one of the chaps spotted it in an old number of the "Australasian."—Did you hear from Mr Hopwood?'

'Yes; and he wrote and said that, under the changed circumstances, he did not believe that he could point out the exact spot.'

'Then I'm blown if I could,' said Turner.

This was hard on Patten, and he hesitated for a moment. 'Look here, Turner,' he resumed; 'there's no occasion to speak hastily. Think the matter over, and see if you cannot remember any slight thing that will bring it back to you.'

Turner pondered for a short time. 'I might find the place if I was back there,' he hazarded doubtfully at last.

'It's most important that I get these papers,' went on Robert. 'I have been tracking you up now for six months, and I am not going to be balked for a trifle. I believe if you were on the spot it would all come back to you. I will tell you what I will do. I suppose your billet here is nothing very much; you could do as well in Queensland?'

'Just as well,' was the answer.

'Then I will pay your expenses round to the place, and allow you a couple of pounds a week during the time we are travelling. If we are successful in getting the papers, or what is left of them, I will give you a hundred pounds.'

'I'm in it,' cried Jim, without any hesitation; and they turned back to the camp.

Patten was sound asleep that night, when he was suddenly aroused by somebody shaking him by the shoulder. Rousing himself, he found it was Turner.

'It has all come back to me,' he said in an excited sort of whisper. 'I lay there thinking about picking up that man, and trying to puzzle out how I could make sure of the place, when all of a sudden I remembered about filling the quart pots. Right straight under our camp a bar of rock crossed the bed of the river. I remember it well because the water was deep just alongside, and it was so handy to stand on and dip the quarts. Of course, Mr Hopwood doesn't recall it because he didn't go down the bank; but I was down two or three times.'

'By Jove, that's something definite,' returned Robert; 'but I noticed several bars crossing the river here and there.'

'Ah! but this one was a slate bar with a seam of quartz running beside it. No flood could alter that, could it?'

'I shouldn't think so,' said Patten.

They left the camp; and in due time they arrived in Keppel Bay, where, leaving the mail-steamer in which they had travelled, they ascended the Fitzroy River in the tender. Robert

stood on the wharf waiting for his luggage to be put ashore, when a hand was laid on his shoulder. He turned to find his half-brother beside him.

'I expected, you Bob,' he said. 'Now, supposing we make this little trip to Bendabar together.'

WITH HER MAJESTY'S MAILS IN MANITOBA.

'GET up, boys!' And amid the merry music of the sleigh-bells and the hearty good-byes of our friends, the wiry little ponies jump away at the crack of the whip, and Her Majesty's mail once more leaves the Birtle post-office on its road to Shellmouth, fifty miles or more away across the snow-clad prairies. At a rattling pace we cross the Bird Tail River, whence the thriving little Manitoban village takes its name; but we soon get a check at the foot of the steep hill leading out of the town, for, like many another settlement in the Far North-West, Birtle lies deep in a hollow sheltered by clustering hills from the none too gentle touch of the biting blizzard. Slowly we climb the ascent, and, stopping awhile at the railway station to take aboard a few parcels, we make all snug, and prepare to face the long stretch of country that lies between us and our destination. It is a clear cold morning, with the mercury registering thirty degrees below zero; and the rising sun, glinting on the earth's fleecy covering with a rich golden hue, imparts to the landscape a charm peculiar to early morning in these cold latitudes; while, from scattered chimneys, the smoke rises in long, straight columns of fluffy gray, observable for miles in such a clear atmosphere as this.

There had been no wind last night, so that the trail is fairly good, and the team lay themselves down to their work as if they enjoy it. Well wrapped up as we are in buffalo robes and skin coats, we begin to enjoy it too, and drink in the keen air in exhilarating draughts. True it is cold, but we feel it no more than we should ten degrees of frost under a murky sky in England. Our driver, an old Londoner, who knows every inch of the fifty-mile trail as well as Piccadilly, is a man of good education, entertaining, and of strong Tory predilections, while we are to democracy inclined; and so, with argument, chat, and reminiscences of the last Riel rebellion, we slip along, and soon have covered the twelve miles to Lansburn. Here we change mail-bags; and in response to the invitation to come in and warm ourselves, we sit awhile by the stove, and take advantage of the heat to enjoy a few whiffs; for, outside, the nicotine will quickly freeze and choke our pipes. We may not stay here long, though, and once more muffling ourselves in our wraps, we leave for Binscarth, the end of the first stage.

After a few miles, it is evident we are getting into a more thickly settled district. Pretty log-houses, each under its sheltering bluff ('Bluff,' in the Canadian North-West, signifies a clump of trees, meet the eye at frequent intervals; whilst

russet-coated cattle, turned out for the warmth of the mid-day sun, pick at the hay thrown over the stackyard fences in evident contentment. Surely this keen air gives one a wonderful appetite; and we are not sorry to see coming in view the farm-buildings of the Binscarth colony, even now getting famed from Winnipeg to the West Coast for its cattle. The last two miles are over a first-rate trail, and soon crossing the railroad, we land at the hotel. Here the driver, who is 'boss of the whole outfit'—that is, sole owner of the rig and the ponies—unhitches, and personally superintends the feeding of his team; and then together we sit down to dinner, served piping hot in a room the grateful warmth of which is very acceptable after our cold drive.

Dinner over, we take a few more whiffs, and then—mail matters having been 'fixed up' meanwhile—we get behind a fresh team, and prepare to meet the twenty-seven miles of the second stage. On every side now the dwelling of the free and independent homesteader meets the eye; and the healthy-looking youngsters stopping in the midst of the 'chores' to look at the mail-stage as it flashes by, seem to tell of comfort and plenty, if not absolute wealth, within. Eight miles out we enter on a stretch of rolling prairie-land. Diminutive hills and tiny dales—like fairy playgrounds—are interspersed with leafless poplar bluffs, pretty enough in summer, and even now pleasantly relieving the monotony of the dead-white prospect. But the snow has drifted badly in these hollows, and now and again the ponies flounder to their knees, and slowly we plough our way through; but once more on rising ground we see Russell in the distance, and a good road over a piece of comparatively flat country soon brings us to the little town with its motley population of old-countrymen, Canadians, and half-breeds. Official work detains us here again for a few minutes, during which we make our way into the store and post-office—the general rendezvous and loafing-place, especially on mail-day—and gather the latest news.

'All aboard' once more, and we are soon leaving Russell behind us on the last sixteen miles of the journey. On we go, up hill and down over a wretched trail, and through drifts that oftentimes take the little jumper away above the runners, while the air is getting colder as the short winter day begins to close in. Conversation now flags, and, somehow or another, our wraps don't seem so thick as when we started; and how we long to get out and stretch our stiffening limbs! Never mind; there's another twelve miles done, and we comfort ourselves by thinking of 'Jackson's' and tea when—'Hulloa! what's that?' standing out in dark silhouette against the rapidly reddening sky! 'Coyotes! by Jove!' And as a bend in the road brings them right on our flank, and scarce fifty yards away, we count no fewer than seven 'friers in orders gray.' Lean and hungry brutes enough they are, and it is with bitter feelings we recollect we are entirely without 'shooting-irons.' Harmless to man, our vigorous yells soon send them scampering to the right-about, to hunt for a supper off the shy but succulent cony.

We pass Lake Beautiful, and are soon at the top of the hill looking over the luxuriant hay flats of the Assiniboine Valley, and for an instant draw

rein and drink in the restful beauty of the scene, while coachee bursts into poetry:

The day is ending,
The night is descending,
The marsh is frozen,
The river dead.

Through clouds like ashes
The red sun flashes
On village windows
That glimmer red—

he quotes, and well he may. The sun is just sinking behind the far bank of the river Assiniboine, leaving behind tiny, many-hued cloudlets, and bars of light, that shade away from ruddy crimson and glorious gold into masses of softest pink and amber; while the snow, catching a thousand luminous tints from the whole range of the western sky, seems to glow with a beauty more than earthly. From afar, the tinkle of the cow-bells and the cries of the herders, mellowed by distance, come floating to us in sweet and musical cadence. But the surly sough of the north-west wind, even now gathering energy for to-morrow's blizzard, bids us hasten; and calling to the team, we descend the hill and hurry across the intervening flat at a pace that soon lands us at the Shellmouth post-office. Many an eager eye on the watch for letters from the dear old home has desisted our coming; and the bags safely delivered, we turn to 'Jackson's,' where, with a celerity more than worthy of the old coaching days, kindly hands instantly unhitch and take stablewards the tired ponies, to be fed and tended by their ever-thoughtful owner before even he thinks of his own pressing needs.

What a picture we should make at home in caps, mitts, and huge buffalo coats, with our moustaches solid lumps of ice, and beards and whiskers of a hoary whiteness that old Father Christmas himself might envy! Just now, however, sentiment gives way to supper, and that discussed with true nor'-western appetites, we gather once more round the stove, and heeding not the blast as it hurtles against the house in impotent fury, we sit and smoke, and with yarn and merry chorus beguile a few hours till sleep—as well beloved as supper—summons us to rest.

Thus, in the depth of winter, some three or more years ago, I travelled with Her Majesty's mail in Manitoba, a journey that was preceded, and has been followed, by many others in different parts of the North American Continent, and accompanying men employed in the same vocation, thereby affording me ample opportunity for observing how the business of mail-carrying is conducted in different localities.

In new countries and in sparsely settled districts it is so frequently attended with difficulty and danger, that the men employed in this service are generally of a resolute and hardy type. In Manitoba and the North-west Territories, the work is usually done by men who own the teams they drive; and a large proportion are old-countrymen, for whom 'running the mail' with its free outdoor life, not wholly unattended with excitement, has untold charms. In the United States, too, I have 'happened across' Englishmen employed in the same capacity; and at one time

I met in Texas a scion of one of our noblest houses riding pony-back with the mails between San Antonio and Bandera, for fifteen dollars a month and his board; and a six-shooter always ready to hand in the not unlikely event of being 'held up by road-agents.' The distance is fifty miles each way; and as the letters left San Antonio every second day, this meant continuous riding for six days, or three hundred miles a week.

In the Great Lone Land, however, the various mail-routes, though often embracing over a hundred miles of country, and conducted alike in scorching heat and intense cold, are entirely free from hostile interruption, and never once in the course of many years' experience did I hear of the mail-robber getting in his work at the expense of the Government.

Occasionally, however, the mail-bags are conveyed by means other than those prescribed by the postal department; and though I have known the gay and festive ox-team pressed into the service, it was not exactly in the hope of gaining additional speed thereby; nor, when the bags are conveyed afoot, does the process quite come up to our notions of how the business ought to be managed.

But these are only exceptional cases. For ordinary work, a light four-wheeled rig drawn by a couple of ponies, and capable of seating one or more passengers in addition to parcels, is the usual thing; and on some routes where passengers and parcels are few and far between, one animal is sufficient to do the work. But in the winter, when the snow lies deep and wheels are unsuitable, a low 'jumper' with broad runners, but quite open, takes the place of buggy or buckboard; and so, keeping himself protected as well as possible from 'winter's cold, wild winds, and drifting snow,' and enveloped in furs, the driver is willing and able to go anywhere and do anything; and a blizzard has to be keen indeed that will scare these sturdy fellows from the trail when duty calls.

THE HOME OF A HERO.

GENERAL GORDON spent nearly all his life abroad, and was accustomed to make himself at home anywhere; nevertheless, it was the house in Rockstone Place, Southampton, until recently occupied by his sister, the late Miss Mary Augusta Gordon, which should be regarded as his real home. Thither his thoughts would often turn, and there he rested after his various expeditions and sojourns in foreign countries.

Rockstone Place is a crescent of white houses, on the heights above the town, overlooking the waters of the Solent and the distant slopes of the Isle of Wight. On the other side of the drive there is a green garden or lawn, planted with ilex and rhododendron, with a screen of elms and shrubbery which partly hides the galvanised iron roofs of the Ordnance Survey offices. The spot is quiet and sequestered, yet with an outlook on the world; and here Gordon, who loved retirement, could refresh his eyes, long used to the sands of the desert and the palms of the tropics, with the verdure of his native land.

The dwelling itself is the middle one of a

group of three, the two smaller forming the wings. A short flight of stone steps leads up to the door, which is set under a small vestibule. Two large plain windows flank the door, one on either side. Besides the green Venetian blinds, these windows are provided with two jalousies or open shutters, painted white, and folded back, each half against the wall. The jalousies give a Southern or Oriental look to the house, and remind one of the tropics. Above them are three other and smaller windows, also having blinds and jalousies. Higher still are the windows of the attic.

In the entrance hall the first thing that struck a visitor was the figure of a young crocodile, oddly fixed to the lintel of the drawing-room door on the left, as though it were running up the wall. It was a real stuffed crocodile, but varnished like the door-post, and resembling a piece of wood-carving. It had been sent home from the Nile by Gordon along with a larger specimen, which had not been kept. How he came by it we do not know, but, curiously enough, it was almost the only hunting trophy one could see, notwithstanding his travels. Perhaps the reason is to be found in the hero's well-known sympathy with animals and tender solicitude for them.

There also were two great spears, presented by King M'Tesa of Uganda. One of them was a parade spear with a flat copper head, and a carved handle, pliant as a cane. The other was a common spear, hafted with wood, and headed with a large double-edged blade. Both were very heavy and strong, much bigger than the Zulu 'assegai' or the Soudan spear, yet they are thrown by the natives with great precision. In a corner of the lobby near the stairs there lay a tom-tom or war-drum, also received from M'Tesa, the large bowl being of copper. It had come to serve the humbler functions of a dinner-gong.

The drawing-room was hung with numerous pictures, and decorated with knick-knacks and works of art, each with a history, and in some way or other associated with his wanderings. The pictures were chiefly landscapes of foreign countries which he had visited, and amongst them were several views of Khartoum, including a photograph of the Government Palace, where he had resided; and a water-colour sketch of the low mud forts of Tutti Island and their solitary palms, a scene on which his eyes must often have rested during his last stay in the country. The sketch was drawn by him, and sent home to Miss Gordon with a small pasteboard box of bullets, which, however, never reached her. The lid of the box was found in the hut where Colonel Stewart is believed to have been killed, at the time the Diaries were recovered, and it still bore the address in Gordon's writing, 'Rockstone Place, Southampton.'

On the other side of the drawing-room were several large photographs, one of them a portrait of the late Khedive of Egypt, presented by himself; the others represented four of Gordon's officers in the Soudan, all in Egyptian uniform, with the red official fez.

In a recess on the right of the fireplace, and as it were amongst these photographs, there was a picture of Gordon himself, painted by Lady Abercromby from a photograph taken in Brussels

while he was over there seeing the king of the Belgians, preparatory, as he then believed, to his departure for the Congo, but in reality, as it turned out, before his sudden despatch to the Soudan on his last mission.

It was a portrait-head of Gordon as he then appeared, clad in a black frock-coat, with a white turn-down collar and a black neck-tie—his usual dress at home. The canvas, though small, presented the head and shoulders life-size, and was surrounded by a rich gilt frame. The likeness was remarkable, and undoubtedly it was one of the finest portraits of the General ever executed. Whoever would see how Gordon looked in the flesh might do so here. The wonderful blue eyes, with their straight open noble gaze, fairly beamed with intelligence and truth. It was rather the look of a bright boy than a man tried in the world as he had been. There was a fascination in the light blue orbs gazing on the spectator as if about to speak to him—the fascination of intellect and perfect goodness. The head was erect, and the look was turned slightly upward. A pleasant expression was diffused all over the kindly face, and lingered in the genial curves of the cheeks and lips. The curly nut-brown hair, with its tinge of gray and gold, was repeated in the short moustache and delicate side-whiskers. The noble brow, so white and high, was very full over the temples, where it was traversed by a bar of care and thought. The strong and sinewy neck was turned to redness by the eastern sun. Any one would say on seeing this canvas that it was the picture of a good man.

Below it, on a small table in the same recess, there was a fine photograph of Lord Charles Beresford in his Soudan uniform; and a smaller one of Lady Beresford. On the wall beside these pictures were some memorial verses to the lamented hero of Khartoum. In the farther corner on the right of the window stood a small painting on porcelain of Gordon in his Chinese costume, with banners hung behind as drapery; the likeness, however, was not particularly good. There were numerous Chinese mementos in this room. On either side of the mantel-piece were two small glass cases, containing the bead necklaces forming part of Gordon's dress as a Mandarin of the Yellow Jacket, beautiful beads of coral and amber, big as marbles, with appendages of pale-green jade. On one of the tables lay his Chinese card-case, a large thin pocket-book of red leather, holding several squares of red tissue-paper inscribed with Chinese characters. This card-case used to be carried before him by a bearer when he went out visiting his Celestial friends.

Opposite the fireplace were a number of relics from the Summer Palace at Pekin, including some exquisite vases of enamelled copper from the Emperor's room. Gordon purchased these articles, as he did not condescend to 'looting,' and sent them to his sister. Amongst them were some grotesque figures cut in jade and rock-crystal; in particular a tablet of milky-green jade delicately carved with a Chinese landscape. On the mantel-piece, side by side with Dresden shepherdesses, were more of these clear crystal figures; and beside the hearth-rug stood a small jade image of a horse, also from the wreck of the Summer Palace. Round the neck of one of the enamelled vases there hung a dingy metal torque, of slender

workmanship, but in shape exactly like the larger and more handsome gold torques worn by the old Gaulish chieftains, and still found in British barrows. A brass crescent and other trinkets were fastened to one end of it, as an amulet. Gordon had this from a black man, who wore it round his neck, and no other dress or ornament. Beside it lay the barbed head of an arrow or dart of the Barri tribe, the barbs, of which there were several, being turned back like hooks from the stem in an ugly catching fashion. There was a bundle of these darts sent home by Gordon, some of them barbed, others plain. They were picked up by him in the woods, where he found a quiverful hanging on a tree, and thinking they belonged to no one, took them with him. The natives, however, discovering their loss, soon after attacked his boat, and a shower of arrows fell around it, some of which struck the boat, and are now, amongst the others, distinguishable by their blunted points.

There were other interesting memorials of Gordon's various life in the drawing-room; for instance, a 'vermilion pencil' such as the Emperor of China signs his decrees with; a cake of red China ink, inscribed with golden letters and figures of the imperial dragon; the vellum Address of the British residents in Shanghai; the central sight of a gun taken by Gordon at the Redan in 1855, and a bullet which struck the front of his cap while he was doing duty in the trenches before Sebastopol.

A photograph of his old officers in the Soudan, most of whom were negroes, and some of them old criminals, would have been difficult to match for sheer hangdog brutishness of feature. 'No matter what they had done, he forgave them,' said Miss Gordon to the writer one day. 'They do not look like faces to be trusted.' 'He trusted them.' In the same part of the room there was a box of coco-de-mer wood from the Seychelles Islands, made by Gordon himself when he was commandant of that terrestrial paradise, which he considered a vestige of the lost Eden. We may mention here that a walking-stick and a small clock-tower of the same hard streaky wood were presented by the late Miss Gordon to the Kew Gardens Botanical Museum, along with a wax model of the double cocoa-nut, made by Gordon himself. Beside the palmwood lay a thing which Gordon prized more than his richer souvenirs—a small slab of reddish-brown stone from the bed-rock of the reputed site of the temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, and the place where Abraham is supposed to have offered up Isaac.

The dining-room on the right of the hall was the room in which Gordon liked to sit. It contained another excellent picture of him, also painted by Lady Abercromby. Some prefer the one in the drawing-room; but Miss Gordon unhesitatingly preferred this one, and considered it a perfect likeness. It was a large half-length portrait of Gordon, dressed in a general officer's uniform, and so placed that it could be seen best in the bright morning light. The attitude was much the same as in the other picture; but the tone was darker and the style stronger. There was the same crispy nut-brown hair, streaked with gray; the same steadfast gaze, but the expression of the eyes was deeper and more thoughtful. If the other picture seemed to show us a good

man, this one presented a great man. In the broad and splendid brow, in the full, keen, and penetrating eyes, we found an evidence of his military genius and power of command. We felt, in fact, that we were looking on a conqueror and a born leader, nay, a king of men. Fearless courage, keen scrutiny, which can look through and through the soul, were here united with the highest powers of administration and resource. It was the head of a great soldier we were looking on, one who was a host in himself, and who might have been the saviour of his country. We felt, too, how incalculable was the loss we had sustained, should the empire ever be attacked by a European power.

So much for a superficial view. But there was more than the great captain in this face. Let us look at these indescribable eyes, which riveted the attention with their magnetic power. Probably no other hero or soldier in ancient or modern times had eyes like Gordon. 'Capsume,' the little dusky slave-boy whom Gordon had freed and brought to England, and whose photograph was in the room, showing his cheek scarred across by a large 'H' branded in the flesh, said to a lady once: 'What! General Gordon! Ain't you afraid of his eyes? He can see in the dark—the light is within.' Truly, there was a light within, a spiritual light, which radiated from his eyes. But there was also a pregnancy of meaning which it is difficult to analyse—a look of inspiration—of divine possession. It gave one the impression of something great, but unknown, a central secret, an inner mystery, like the unknown god of the Greeks. Mere creative genius and force of will would not have inspired that sense of a divine presence.

Gordon would sit for long intervals, looking just like that, in the stuffed armchair on the left of the fireplace. Of what was he thinking? Was he recalling some past scene, or devising some new plan, meditating some point of policy, of doctrine? or was he listening to some inner voice, and seeing some inner vision? We cannot tell. Gordon was more than the hero and the soldier; he was something of the seer and the saint.

Men either good or great are rare; Gordon was evidently both, and hence his power. He attracted alike those who loved the good, and those who admired great talents. A soldier, an engineer, a man of action, he had an influence over practical men of the world, whether soldiers or civilians, which a simple preacher or man of letters cannot readily obtain. His versatile gifts and published writings also attached him to the studious. But if his power over civilised persons, including his intimate friends, was great, so also was it over savage or debased people. We have been told by an eye-witness of his influence over his Chinese soldiers that he 'seemed to make gentlemen of them.'

From these marvellous eyes, so divinely lit as with an internal illumination, we turn towards Gordon's 'Soudan Throne,' a folding armchair he always sat in at Khartoum, and carried with him on his camel journeys. It was a little straight-backed chair, having a skeleton frame of round iron, a carpet back and seat, gilt knobs for ornament, and small pads on the arms for comfort. The carpet had grown dim in the African

sun, and deprived it of all royal pretensions, so that when Gordon returned from his Governorship of the Soudan and suddenly asked, 'Where's my throne? Has it been brought in?' they were all surprised. His throne! Nobody had seen a throne. But at length the camp-stool was found where it had been stowed away. In the Soudan, only Berzati Bey, his interpreter, was allowed the privilege of sitting in this seat of honour, after Gordon. Berzati's photograph was in the dining-room, with an inscription in Gordon's writing: 'For three years my brave and faithful friend, known by European scoffers as the Black Imp.' Berzati afterwards fell in the massacre of Hicks Pasha's army.

Leaving the dining-room and descending the stair, from which a glimpse was got of a pretty back garden, we came to a small unpapered room with an area window opening on the garden. This was a kind of workshop of Gordon, where he would sit and smoke, and pass away the time unpacking and arranging his 'rubbish,' as he called his collections. For the finer things he seemed to care very little, and for the worthless trifles a great deal. On the mantel-piece of this room stood a large tin teapot with which he had made tea for his little protégés at Gravesend, his 'kings' and 'scuttlers,' as he called them. He used to find berths for these little waifs on board ships, and would follow their course at sea from day to day by sticking pins in a large map which hung in his quarters at Gravesend.

Another room of the basement was a kind of study, containing a desk-table, at which he used to write; and in order to guard his privacy, he would put a handkerchief, or hammer, or something outside the door, to signify that he was busy. It was a plain room, like the other, and devoid of all luxury. Gordon smoked a good deal, and chiefly cigarettes from Cairo, but he always went down-stairs to do it.

Gordon's bedroom, on the first floor, was very simply furnished with several cane-bottomed chairs, an ordinary armchair, and a folding deck-lounge with cushions. There were a few pictures on the walls, and over the mantel-piece hung two texts, the upper, in German letters, running:

Oh, ask not thou how shall I bear
The burden of to-morrow,
Sufficient for to-day its care,
Its evil, and its sorrow;
God imparteth by the way
Strength sufficient for the day.

The lower, in black print, was from the Psalm 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.'

In the dressing-room off the bedchamber were to be seen the lines:

Christ is the word, and spake it.
He took the bread and brake it,
And what that word doth make it,
I do receive and take it.

This room was doubtless the sanctum sanctorum of his home. Here he probably meditated many of his plans, recalled his experiences, and shaped his future course. Here, above all, we may suppose that he gave up his mind to those devotional reflections which formed a large element in his

spiritual life. In the other rooms, or in the garden, he mixed with company, and shared in the world; but here he was most himself; and the visitor was conscious of a feeling that here he was treading upon holy ground.

THE ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA.

PERHAPS no country in the world provides a better and fuller illustration of the principle of the survival of the fittest than does Australia. Civilisation and barbarism there came into conflict, and once again the inexorable law of victory to the more adaptable was the result. Unlike the subjugation of the Red Man of America, the victory has been achieved not so much by force of arms as by force of circumstances, and the want of adaptation on the part of the weaker contestants. In bravery and in many other qualities the American Indians were the equals of the whites. Physically and intellectually, the braves of the Far West were far finer men, and, by their surroundings and traditions, were far more fitted to cope with the hated Pale Faces than were the native tribes of the Great Island Continent. Inch by inch the Indians were driven off from their lands, never admitting themselves beaten. Even now, cooped up within their reserves, they as strongly refuse to admit the overlordship of the mighty horde which has spread from end to end of their once boundless happy hunting-grounds, as they did when the Pilgrim Fathers first set foot on Plymouth Rock. They are still strong enough to form a menace to the civilisation which hems them in, firm in the belief that they shall again roam free and unfettered in the land from the Father of Waters to the Setting Sun. Hard as it went against the grain, the Indians again and again gave proof that, if need be, they could adapt themselves to the manners and ideas of their enemies. As surely as the Australian black, the American Indian is doomed to extinction; but whilst the extinction of the latter will be the putting away of a brave nation, dying because of its own unconquerable will, the flickering out of the former will be from far other and lower causes. The great majority of the Red Men disclaimed alike the virtues and vices of the whites, strong in their native strength and traditions; the Aborigines of Australia, unable to raise themselves to the standard of the new civilisation, and too weak to fight it down, fell only too easy victims to its vices. Indolent and unambitious by nature, they willingly exchanged their precarious existence with freedom for the flesh-pots of serfdom. Their only ambition was for a lazy life and plenty to eat. They soon discovered that to accept food from the settlers was more to their liking than to hunt, fish, or fight; and so they chose to become the miserable hangers-on of the settlements, and imitators of the white man's vices.

Several causes helped to this easy surrender of freedom. Whereas the American Indian lived in a land of varied beauty—rushing rivers, endless lakes, wide-reaching grassy plains, and rugged mountains—where wild animals, birds, and fish were plentiful, and in a climate which called forth all his energies and ingenuity to battle with, the Australian aborigine was the child of

the monotonous bushland, of dismal plains and drought-wasted, sluggish rivers, where food of all kinds was comparatively scarce and inferior. What he gained from the warmer, sloth-breeding climate, he more than lost by want of vigour and the need for adaptability. Nature forms her children after her own likeness. Country and climate stamped the Indian a valiant, unconquered patriot; the Australian black, if not a slave, a weak dependent. Then, too, the whites with whom these two nations first came in contact, and from whom they received their earliest impressions, were of a widely differing mould. The pioneer settlers of America were strong, earnest men, men of conscience, the picked manhood of England; the first settlers in Australia were the scum of the English nation, the refuse of the prisons. If the Pilgrim Fathers struck hard blows and carried things with a high hand, they did it as men of purpose. Like the men who rebuilt Jerusalem, with one hand they wrought, and with the other they fought, fighting and working alike to the glory of their God and their religion.

They brought with them none of the tempting vitiating vices so alluring to the savage nature. The opening chapter of Australian history is one of the vilest pages ever written. A horde of men steeped in every crime were turned loose in the country—men who for the most part gloried in debasing themselves and in debasing all with whom they came in contact. Hard fighting and stern religiousness were the factors in the settlement of America: rum and vice in that of Australia. The differing results accorded with the different beginnings.

The blacks of Australia, however, did not succumb altogether without a struggle. They resented the intrusion of the new-comers; but the struggle was for the most part one of cunning and cruelty rather than a brave resistance. It took the form of treacherous reprisals for injuries received or supposed to have been received; it never approached to a combined struggle for freedom. The outer line of settlement was a sort of skirmishing ground where a half-hearted resistance and continuous cattle-raiding on the one hand, and land-grabbing and the dishonouring of the native women on the other, engendered bad feeling, and led to innumerable bloody murders. The early squatters undoubtedly ran many risks from their treacherous foes. The blacks, however, were generally to be won over by a little judicious handling and feeding. Much of the treachery was the outcome of the treatment they had received at the hands of the whites, who scrupled little to shoot down the aborigines like beasts, the 'lifting' or disturbing of a few cattle being considered a sufficient excuse for declaring war against the whole tribe. In some districts the war was one of extermination. Boomerang, waddy, and spear, never so deftly wielded, were no match for firearms. Might was right, and treachery counted little against salt-petre.

The settlement of the country meant its conquest. Once within the line of civilisation, what little power the aborigines had possessed was broken. Equally unable to breast or adapt themselves to the new order of things, their tribal compacts broken, their land gone, the animals on

which they had depended for food displaced by sheep and cattle, it only remained for the blacks to become the creatures of their dispossessioners, the recipients of their charity. In all parts of Australia where the country is in any degree settled, this is the position which they now occupy. The old order of things still holds good in the 'new,' little-explored country of Central Australia, the northern part of West Australia, the Northern Territory and some parts of the 'Gulf' (Carpentaria) country. Cattle-stealing and occasional murders are heard of amongst the 'wild' blacks, who still sometimes hold their tribal 'corroborees,' and are responsible for considerable trouble.

Captain Phillip, the first governor of Australia, writing about 1790, not long after the settlement of the country, computed the number of aborigines at one million. He based his computation on the fact that there were some three thousand in the districts then known, a ratio that would give a million for the whole continent. This was merely a guess, but probably was not so very far wide of the mark. The estimate of other and later authorities is much lower. The census of 1881 gave the number of aborigines at thirty-one thousand seven hundred. This number, however, represented only the 'civilised' blacks, and the true number is supposed to have been two hundred thousand. From these figures it will be seen that the decrease is steadily but surely going on, and that the time when the Australian black shall have been 'improved' off the face of the earth can be pretty accurately worked out by rule of three. In Tasmania, the end has already come, the last of the island aborigines having died in 1876. On the Continent, after the pure bloods have died out, some characteristics of the decayed people will linger on in the half-breeds.

If the aborigines have been sufferers by the influx of the whites, they have also in some degree been gainers. The Governments of the several colonies have always more or less recognised their obligations to the original possessors of the soil. For many years there has been an annual distribution of blankets and other necessaries. Mission stations have also been established by Government and private funds in different parts of the country, where as many of the blacks as are willing to conform to the mild rules laid down for the conduct of the establishments are housed, fed, and taught. Their want of constraint, and their instinct for a free roaming life, however, generally weigh more heavily than does even their liking for regular rations and a lazy life. The majority prefer to become hangers-on about the townships and stations, eking out existence by begging and doing odd jobs. Every station and township has its little band of black-fellows and their 'gins,' who wander about in wonderful assortments of the cast-off clothing of the whites, begging from every one, and not always clearly distinguishing between 'meum' and 'tuum.' 'Bacca' and six-pences are what they most favour, but nothing at all comes wrong. The men and women are alike inordinately fond of tobacco and intoxicants. This fondness for drink has had not a little to do with their downfall. It is a pitiable sight to see the poor creatures loafing about the hotels, begging and praying for the maddening poison

which they know too well is fast destroying them. Once having acquired the vices of the whites, their ruin is swift. A few, but not many, are employed as cattle-men, shepherds, and general helps about the stations. They are also drafted into the police force as mounted troopers and trackers, and have done and are doing some splendid service in hunting down criminals who escape to the bush. Many are fine runners and athletes, but since abandoning the old wild life, their prowess in these respects is waning.

Mission-work amongst the blacks cannot be said to have been successful. Undoubtedly, good work has been done by the devoted missionaries who have spent their lives in trying to raise and enlighten the native tribes. The low type of intellect, the shiftless, aimless life, the wandering habits, the traditional instincts of the aborigines, and the too often evil example set them by the rough settlers, have been hard to overcome. Some few have truly embraced Christianity; but with the majority—as with many other so-called converted heathens—it must be sorrowfully confessed that their acceptance of religion has been from interested motives. They are like children—easily pleased with anything new. The mission-work shows best on paper. The children, however, give better promise.

The day of the black-fellows has gone, and gone for ever. Whilst the Great Sunny South Land was hidden away amongst the secrets of the sea, he was her fitting lord and master. But the time came when she should sweep 'into the younger day.' Nature had prepared for the change, but he had not. She was ready for the great wave of advancement, but he was not; and so he was swept away before it. One hundred years have gone by since the war of races commenced in Australia. Probably before another century, or century and a half, has ended, the last of the Australian aborigines will have died out, and the memory of the black man will linger only in the liquid music of the native names which everywhere dot the map of the Island Continent, and which, happily, the Anglo-Saxon has the good taste to prefer to his own more commonplace nomenclature.

TRAGEDY.

A SKETCH.

AN ME! the loneliness,
When our own sin has shut the doors of home,
And we are left without—the deepening gray
Of twilight lying chill upon the old
Remembered paths, and the long night of death
Already creeping o'er the eastern edge
Of a deserted world. The fireside glow
Strikes through the casement, and the children play
About the settle of the ingle nook,
The grandsire nodding by the cheerful blaze;
But if there falls a shadow on the pane,
It is the ivy or the slanted rain;
And if a sob breaks in upon the laugh,
It is the wind among the apple boughs—
This is the righteous punishment of sin.

C. AMY DAWSON.

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WHAT IS WEALTH?

THE frequent discussions which from time to time take place in magazines and elsewhere, as to the proper uses of Wealth, suggest the question—What is Wealth? And to that question there seems to be no more comprehensive and definite answer than there was to Pilate's interrogation on the subject of Truth. To be 'rich beyond the dreams of avarice' is a favourite figure of speech, but we may well doubt if the position is capable of realisation, when one regards the stupendous fortunes of some of the American kings of finance.

The truth as to wealth seems to be that it is actually a relative term. In plain words, it is the excess of realisable value which a man possesses above his normal requirements. But when the excess becomes excessive, then it becomes incomprehensible by the majority of men. Thus, to a man with one pound a week, two pounds a week will seem riches, because it implies a large margin for accumulation; but to this man a figure of wealth represented by the numerals £5,000,000 is a mere figure of speech. He can no more grasp its significance than a man who is colour-blind can appreciate the unspeakable glory of the sunset or the dawn. Even richer men than he can find no tangible meaning in such figures.

Wealth, in fact, is not the mere possession of anything in abundance, but the possession in abundance of that which can be used. Midas, at whose fabled touch everything turned into gold, was not wealthy in the true sense, because he could not use what he produced. It is usual to employ his case in pointing the moral against the love of money; but, as a matter of fact, Midas would have been quite as sorely afflicted had his touch transformed everything into sheaves of corn, or joints of beef, or new hats. And thus it is that the conception of wealth must vary with circumstance as well as with individual.

The new 'Gospel of Wealth,' of which so much has been heard of late, is, in essence, this—that it is good for everybody that wealth should be concentrated in few hands. It has been said that

it is better that one man should have one thousand pounds to spend, than that a thousand men should have one pound apiece. It is probable that the weight of opinion against this proposition will be pretty much as a thousand to one, and for very adequate reasons.

The attraction of wealth to the intelligent human creature is twofold. There is the pleasure of winning; and there is the joy of possessing. Now, the joy of possession may be as keen to the owner of a thousand pounds as to the owner of a thousand thousands; but the pleasure of winning is certainly open to all in equal degree, even to the owner of a single pound. No keener enjoyment is possible to the rational animal than persistent effort suffused with perennial hope. This is but to say that the pursuit of wealth gives pleasure to millions; whereas the possession gives a dubious joy only to thousands. According to 'the New Gospel,' these millions have no right to this enjoyment, if one rich man can do more towards the greatest happiness of the greatest number than a thousand men who are not rich. The proposition, however, ignores the absolute and unalterable fact that the nine hundred and ninety-nine men who are debarred from the pursuit of wealth are deprived of the greatest material happiness possible to them.

Upon this hypothesis, the concentration of wealth in a few hands has the very reverse effect of helping towards the greatest happiness of the greatest number, however wise and beneficent in the administration of their wealth may be the possessors. Wisdom, however, is exceptional among those who have made their wealth rapidly. When a man's fortune has grown more rapidly than his intellect or his conscience, the consequences must always be injurious to himself as well as to society. And that is not all. It is not possible for any one man, however wise and beneficent, to administer to the best and fullest uses such fortunes as have been piled up by some men in our time.

It is worth while taking a look at the accumulated wealth of some American millionaires, and

we select them in illustration for two reasons. In the first place, the statistics of such matters are more complete and accessible in America than they are here. And in the second place, there are very few persons in this country whose capitalised means equal those of the transatlantic money kings. Again, in this country accumulation is the work of a lifetime, or even of generations; while in America it has been frequently the work of a few years. The fortunate beings who suddenly 'strike ile,' or discover 'a pocket,' form a factor in the greatest economic problem of the age, without knowing it.

By a calculation made a year or two ago by an American statistician, it seems that seventy citizens of the United States possessed among them an aggregate wealth of 540 million pounds. That gives an average of about $7\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds apiece. To come to particulars. There was one estate—we refrain here from mentioning names—returned as worth no less than 30 million. There were five individuals valued at 20 million; one valued at 14 million; two valued at 12 million; six valued at 10 million; six valued at 8 million; four valued at 7 million; thirteen valued at 6 million; ten valued at 5 million; four valued at $4\frac{1}{2}$ million; and fifteen valued at 4 million.

The brain reels before such figures. They express measures of wealth which the ordinary mortal is powerless to grasp.

Besides these seventy colossal fortunes, there are fifty other persons in the Northern States alone valued at over 2 million each—thirty of them being valued in all at 90 million. There were some little time ago published lists of sixty-three millionaires in Pennsylvania possessing in the aggregate 60 million, and of sixty persons in three villages near New York whose wealth aggregated 100 million. In Boston, fifty families pay taxes on annual incomes of about £200,000 each.

We have nothing to compare with such individual cases of wealth in Great Britain. Baron Rothschild and Lord Overstone each left about $3\frac{1}{2}$ million; the late Lord Dudley left 4 million; the late Duke of Buccleuch, esteemed the richest Scotchman, left estates valued at 6 million. One living English Duke is valued at 10 million, and another at 8 million; but not many names could be added to these, to place against the above list of American fortunes. In 1884 there were only one hundred and four persons in the United Kingdom whose incomes from business profits were returned as over £50,000 a year. In 1886 there were only seventeen estates which paid Probate Duty on about a quarter of a million each.

There is another interesting feature in the relative distribution of wealth in the two countries. By Mr Goschen's analysis of the income tax returns, it was found that in ten years the number of incomes paying duty on up to £500 had risen 21.4 per cent; those between £500 and £1000 had not increased at all; those between £1000 and £5000 had decreased 2.4 per cent; and those over £5000 had decreased 2.2 per cent. According to Mulhall's estimate in 1877, £7,770,600,000 of British wealth was distributed among 6,676,000 families; and two-thirds of it was owned by 222,500 families.

The statistics of the United States show quite other results. They prove not only that the wealthy class there is enormously wealthier than the wealthiest class of Great Britain, but also that the wealth of the country is in much fewer hands. Mr Thomas G. Shearman estimates the average annual income of the richest hundred Americans at about £300,000; and the average annual income of the richest hundred Englishmen at about £90,000. The earnings of fully four-fifths of American families do not average, he says, £100 per annum. According to the estimates of the wealth of American millionaires, it seems that 25,000 persons own one-half of the entire wealth of the United States; and if the present rates of taxation and accumulation continue, it is computed that that great country will be practically owned by about 50,000 persons—say one-thousandth part of the present population.

We have cited these figures because they carry on the face of them the refutation of the new doctrine that it is good for the world that wealth should be concentrated in few hands. That one hundred and twenty persons in the United States should possess among them an aggregate capital equal to the entire National Debt of Great Britain is a remarkable fact, which cannot but have vast economic and ethical significance. For it is not conceivable that these hundred and twenty persons can so administer such a fund as, say, 120,000 persons, with smaller proportionate shares in it.

And then as regards the possession of wealth, the means by which it has been acquired cannot be disregarded. It is not to be assumed that all millionaires have made their fortunes by wholesome industry, affording employment and happiness to many thousands during its accumulation. Many of the American fortunes have been made under the shelter of the strict system of Protection, which that country preserves—that is to say, may have been drawn out of the pockets of the people by the deliberate consent and contrivance of the people themselves. Other fortunes have been made by lucky hits in mining, &c., and are to a large extent the products of chance. Others have been made by a clever, even daring speculation in various departments of commerce and finance. Others, unhappily, by the unscrupulous use of capital in rigging and manipulating markets, to the serious loss of the community.

We are not going to discuss the ethics of the question, but merely suggest that if wealth has not been accumulated by means which sanctify its possession, then it certainly cannot be in the best hands for putting it to uses tending to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Mr Andrew Carnegie will certainly not find many millionaires to agree with him, that the man who dies rich is 'disgraced.' The aspiration of most men, indeed, is to leave behind them as much as possible. And the fact is that it is not practicable for the man of millions to dispense his wealth during his lifetime. Life is so uncertain, and in order to avoid dying 'disgraced,' he would have each day to dispense in some way the earnings of each day, and he could not possibly do it, even if he wanted.

As to the uses to which accumulated wealth may be or should be put, we shall say nothing

here. The subject is too vast and complicated. But a word in conclusion may be offered on the ethical aspect of wealth.

The desire and the longing for that which is expressed in the word Wealth has been from all time, and will be for all time. It is deep-rooted in the heart of man, and it is not necessarily a sordid longing. The desire for wealth does not imply that mere greed and yearning for the possession of gold. It means a great deal more, for it springs from the idea that wealth not only gives power but also happiness. People, not being misers, desire money because they believe, or suppose, that money can enable them to obtain certain articles which will contribute to happiness.

So far good; but the experience of mankind is that there is more happiness to be derived in the pursuit of wealth than in the possession of it. The root of happiness is in the mind, not without; and by the healthy organism, it is found rather in hopeful and manly endeavour, than in placid contentment with surroundings. Pleasure may pall by familiarity; but there is no limit to the pleasures of hope. It is possible, even, that the sordid gold-hunter and ignoble money-grubber has a sort of happiness of his own; but he is not the sort of being we are considering. The pursuit of riches by honourable effort as a means to an end—namely, happiness and the power to bestow happiness—is a perfectly legitimate and rational one. But the worst of it is that we all too much associate money with happiness, and act as if the one term connoted the other. In the haste to be rich, men so often forget to be just—and sometimes even honest—while they lose in the race the faculty of being happy at the end of it. We cannot understand the nature and attributes and responsibilities of wealth aright, if we do not distinguish between money-making as a means to an end, and accumulation for the mere sake of possession.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

The time of pleasant fancies
For lass and lad returns
In velvet on the pansies,
In little rolled-up ferns.

LORD DE TABLEY.

'Oh, Sage, I wish I was you! You are the very happiest, luckiest person in the world.'

Kitty was watching Sage dress with feelings of the deepest dejection.

'It does seem so unfair that you should have a cousin all to yourself. I'm sure you can have a share of our cousins, and my share in them as well, for I can't bear any of them. And I'm quite sure Miss Lambert would put me up into a higher class if I could say, "My aunt, Lady Lester, wishes it;" but I might talk of my aunt Mrs Wilson for half an hour, and no one would pay the least attention. And I do not think, Sage, that Aunt Maria is at all a nice aunt for any one to have, and so tiresome about putting one's elbows on the table.'

'Dear, little Kit, I wish I could give you a share.'

'Well, Sage, I do think you might let me stay at home from school to-day to see Pomona. And I do think I've got a headache; and you know I did not eat half so much bread and butter at breakfast as usual; and I think my tongue is very bad,' said Kitty, examining critically a very red little member in Sage's glass.

'I wish you might, Kit; but father made such a point of your going to school, and he will be vexed if you don't.'

A slight cloud dimmed the brightness of Sage's face, for this was the one drop of bitterness in her cup, that father was by no means so pleased as Sage was at Pomona's appearance, and at this restoration, or rather beginning, of friendly relations between Sage and her mother's family. Perhaps he still nourished resentment of their treatment of his wife; and what he would have welcomed gladly for her sake, though never for his own, he almost resented, now that it had come years too late to gladden her gentle heart; but he could not find it in his heart to pour cold-water on Sage's pleasure, only he listened a little grimly to her glowing descriptions of Pomona's beauty and sweet graciousness, resolving in his inmost mind that the olive branch held out so tardily should only be received by Sage herself, and should not, however willingly it might be done, be extended to himself or his other children. And so, to-day, when Pomona was coming to fetch Sage to take her down to Beechfield, Dr Merridew's professional duties suddenly assumed an engrossing importance they did not always present; and he also harangued his family all through breakfast on the necessity of regular attendance at school; and he was quite cross because Sage suggested that Nigel had coughed in the night.

He would not, he told himself, stand in Sage's way; her mother might have liked her to know the old home which, from the fact that his wife had never dilated on its attractions, had grown in his imagination to a very Paradise, from which, for his sake, she had been banished. It was only right that Sage should know her mother's birthplace and her mother's people; but with Sage it must stop; neither he nor his other children should reap the smallest advantage from the Lesters, even though, by so declining all intercourse, it should separate them somewhat from their own little Sage.

And perhaps he felt—though he was not at all inclined to worldly wisdom—that it might be good for Sage as regards Maurice and his family. It galled him a little now and then to think that Maurice's people might look down on his little girl; and perhaps these fine relations of whom he would have made no mention while they kept aloof, might raise her in the estimation of the Moores.

He did not tell Sage anything of this; but she guessed a little of it, and sometimes debated if she would not draw back and resist Pomona's fascinations, and dwell among her own people, the proud, shabby, little people of Dalston, among whom her life's happiness had found her. But there was no resisting Pomona, or being surly or proud or independent with her; and she could only hope that some day father would

be brought, even against his will, under her sunny influence, when she was quite sure he would fall a victim.

And yet—and yet Mr Ludlow had not done so. That introduction had been altogether a disappointment; and she was almost sure the painter's sudden return to Scar had been in consequence of his meeting with Pomona. It seemed even to have taken away his pleasure in the picture; and he did not go again to see it after his hurried visit on the way from the station, though he had promised to take Kitty the very first day of his return to London.

So perhaps Dr Merriew might not be so fascinated as she was; and how would Maurice like her? or, rather, how did he like her? for Pomona said she had met him, and it must have been at that dinner-party of which he had told her so little. Maurice had not yet returned to London. He was still staying with his old uncle in Sussex; but how much longer he would remain Sage did not know, as the letter she carefully transferred to her pocket when she changed her dress was dated some days back, and did not say which day he should return—so he might; who could tell?—be coming that very day, and she would be away. This was another little drop of bitterness; but, after all, what are two drops in a cup so overflowing with sweetness? for Sage was inclined to agree with Kitty's envious statement that she was the very happiest, luckiest person in the world. She had not told Maurice anything about Pomona's visit; she was reserving all this new, interesting episode in her life to describe to him when he came back, and only made mysterious allusions to it in her letters.

But to-day she was going down to Beechfield; and though she would have been happier if she had had a more recent letter of Maurice's in her pocket, the want of it was not enough to spoil the pleasure of the beautiful May day.

Poor, unwilling, envious Kitty was packed off to school; and Sage was ready, even to the last button of the beautiful gloves Maurice had given her, when the carriage came round the corner, the very sound of the wheels and the stepping of the horses' feet being different somehow from the usual vehicles and horses that passed unnoticed every day.

And if the carriage were different from those usually seen in Dalston, so, too, was the lovely bright face within, all eager and smiling as Sage came out.

'Mayn't I come in and see Kitty?' she said. 'I want to see if she is like the picture, and I have brought her a box of chocolates. I am sure that little girl in the picture likes chocolates. Next time we go to Beechfield, she must come too. I do love taking a child there—they are as happy there as the day is long, as I used to be as a child; and indeed I am the same now.—Oh, Sage, I hope you will like it—it is such a dear old place. You can't help liking mother—every one does. I hope it will be one of her good days, when she can come down or out on to the terrace. It is so warm and sunny to-day, I should think she might venture out.—It is my birthday to-day, do you know, Sage? I am twenty to-day, and I am a week older than you; so I am out of my teens, and you are not; so I shall take care of you and chaperone you. We had a heap of invi-

tations for to-day, and some of them nice ones; but I always spend my birthday with mother; so I refused them all. Lady Charteris looked a little black at me, but I did not care. I told mother that wild horses should not keep me away on my birthday; and this is a real proper birthday, with the apple blossom all out, to make up for my ridiculous name.'

Pomona was in high spirits, and she went on talking gaily while the carriage was taking them to Victoria Station; and Sage was well content to listen.

'There is some present awaiting me at Beechfield; but I don't quite know what it is; but it is sure to be exactly what I like best. Mother has a most wonderful way of finding out what I want, and she knows I don't care for jewellery.—Do you know, Sage, I've never cared for jewellery since I was a little wee bit of a child. I had set my heart on a small blue enamel locket, and cried because mother did not give it me. I fancy it was really a trumpery, little thing, and the nurse I had then, to comfort me, said, "Never mind; you'll have all the Lester diamonds one day of your very own;" and I was full of the idea, and went running to mother to ask if it was true, and if it would be soon; and mother told me it was quite true, and it might perhaps be very soon, for it would be when she died.—Oh, Sage, I remember how I cried; and I hated the sight of diamonds for ever so long; and even now, I haven't quite got over the feeling, though I have had some given me, and see how beautiful they are. Lady Charteris gave me a lovely star this morning—a beauty. I have brought it with me to show to mother; and you must see it; but I know mother's present will be something I shall like much better.—Sage, how I do go on talking, and you so quiet! I think there is something about you that makes one talk, you have such a listening face. One does not feel that you are only listening out of politeness, as most girls do, and are only paying half attention, and thinking of something else, or criticising one's dress and appearance.'

'But I am doing that too,' said Sage; 'I am thinking all the time how nice and sweet you look.'

'You are a wicked, little flatterer, and you do it with such a truthful look, that one cannot disbelieve you.'

'Mr Ludlow always says I am such a good listener; but it really is because I am so interested in what he says.'

'Oh, Mr Ludlow!—a slight cloud passed over Pomona's bright face at the painter's name. 'He is so fond of you, Sage. I wonder why he took such a dislike to poor me, and I must be like his wife too, since the picture is so like me.'

But Sage could offer no explanation except that she thought Mr Ludlow was not well, as he had gone back to Scar next day.

But they had reached Victoria by this time, the scene so often of frantic departures of the Merriew family. After an hour's quick run through beautiful May country, incredibly green beyond the wildest, gaudiest colouring of the most audacious landscape painter, Hillston, the station for Beechfield, is reached; and Pomona recognises a smart groom in tops with the cordiality due to the person who put her first on her shaggy, little

Shetland pony, and who has followed her since over hedges and ditches, and through, I am afraid, more hare-brained adventures than always came to the ears of Lady Lester. He had even now a painful struggle between respect and affection, and a tendency to call her 'Missy,' and say 'Lor bless you!' and to grin wider than is becoming to a gentleman's servant, and to forget to put his finger to his hat at regular intervals; and he had an inclination to lean over from the back seat of the little phaeton that met them at the station, and volunteer remarks on the ponies, or other interesting stable news, instead of sitting up with crossed arms in wooden silence. But no wonder he talked about the ponies, for they were Lady Lester's birthday present to Pomona, and as beautiful a little pair as ever stepped, perfectly matched chestnuts, with plenty of life and action, picking up their dainty feet so prettily, and tossing their spirited, little heads as if life were a good joke, and the little carriage behind them a mere feather's weight.

I am afraid, as regards the ponies, Pomona found Sage for the first time a little unsatisfactory, for much as she admired them, there was no disguising that the admiration was ignorant, for Sage's experience had lain principally among cab and omnibus horses, and even these she had not known intimately; and the feeling chiefly called forth in such experience was that of pity. At Scar, there had been some cart-horses on which, when they went down to drink at the pond, Kitty and the boys used to ride, and these had endearing qualities and large hairy feet; and there was a baby donkey with woolly legs very close together, and a short innocent nose, and a bang of hair on his forehead, like an American girl, which frisked about round its patient, old mother in a manner delightful to behold.

But Sage felt that to mention a young donkey *appropos* of Pomona's ponies might have been taken as an insult; so she wisely refrained; and Stokes, in the back seat, having more knowledge on the subject, presumed on his privilege as an old servant to lean forward and expatiate on their beauties; while Sage drank in all the charms of the road along which the ponies were taking them, as it seemed to her, all too quickly.

The country in May was full of novelty to Sage, as holiday-time does not come till August; and I do not think, if these ponies had not stepped so briskly, Pomona would have got her many yards away from the little station, so lovely was the lane leading up from it, with high banks clad with young green things, that by August have grown dull and dusty.

But Pomona's ponies go too fast for me to describe half the beauties of the way: the little beetle-browed, thatched cottages, garlanded with white clematis; the farms peeping out from among the apple blossom, across broad green meadows striped and fragrant from the big iron roller, whose musical jangle made the ponies prick their ears and listen.

'Here we are!' said Pomona as they turn in at a gate by a pretty, trim lodge, out of which a smiling woman in a white apron runs to open for them to pass in; and Sage gave a little sigh to think that the drive was over.

But 'Here we are' at Beechfield means something different from 'Here we are' in John

Street, where a couple of steps will take you from the street door to the hearthstone; and there were yet three miles to drive, and by far the loveliest half of the drive, through the beautiful park.

I think the deer formed the culminating point of the day to Sage; and after them the house with its stately front of gray stone, clothed at one end with a mantle of shining ivy; and the broad drive that led to it through great banks of rhododendron, hardly stirred any feeling of admiration in her; and it was of the deer she thought when she said to Pomona, as they went up the wide stone steps at the entrance: 'How proud you must be of it all! and to think it will all belong to you one day!'

And Pomona laughed, and then sighed. 'I suppose I am proud of it; at any rate, I am very fond of it. But as to its belonging to me one day—well, you see, dear, it is like the diamonds—I would rather not have it.'

'Oh! Pomona, I am sorry'—

'No; don't be sorry. How can you know what I feel about mother, when you lost yours so long ago!'

After all, talk as we may of the inequalities of life, one is struck now and then by the strangely even balance. If you extract the pure happiness from each one's life, it is surprising how little more you get from boiling down all the heaped-up possessions and riches and glories of one man's opulent life, than you do from the few poor, insignificant possessions of another. Pomona's happiness largely consisted in the frail life and tender love of her mother; surely, in the poorest Whitechapel slum, there may be found like material for happiness.

(To be continued.)

THE HONEY-BEE OF THE FUTURE.

THE Americans, who, like the Athenians of old, are ever on the watch for something new, are reported to be endeavouring to alter the character of the 'little busy bee' by applying to it the principle of artificial selection, in order to make it a useful servant, devoid of sting, yet capable of producing a much larger store of honey than heretofore. We are apt to overlook that interdependence of animal and plant life in the economy of nature, of which Darwin gave a curious instance in his well-known assertion that the number of cats kept in a district would influence the growth of red clover. The reason assigned for this singular connection between the carnivorous animal and the plant is that the cats keep down the mice which destroy the nests of the humble-bees, and as the red clover is fertilised only by humble-bees, it follows that when mice abound, humble-bees are scarce, and so is red clover; but when the mice are killed by cats, the humble-bees have a good time, and spend it in sucking the honey from the red clover. In so doing, they convey the pollen from flower to flower, and thus effect the fertilisation necessary to enable it to produce perfect seeds.

Now the reason why the red clover is thus

dependent upon the good offices of the humble-bee is, that the proboscis of the common hive-bee is not long enough to reach the nectary. The American apiculturist therefore proposes to cross the hive-bee with the giant bee of India, in order to lengthen the proboscis, and so enable it to rifle the nectary of the red clover, thus adding to its food-supply; and by another cross with stingless bees, an effort would be made to get rid of that troublesome sting, which renders the manipulation of a swarm of bees a little difficult and sometimes dangerous.

Both these modifications may be possible, but it is doubtful whether both would be equally useful. A bee's sting is a weapon both of defence and offence; and although its use generally means death to its owner, it is employed much more freely than is agreeable to the recipient. Cases, indeed, are on record in which a swarm of bees, angered by some unknown cause, have attacked men and horses and caused death; whilst even the sting of a single bee has been known to be fatal when received in the throat or in some great nerve-centre; nevertheless, it seems to be an accepted fact that the sting of the bee is a remedy for rheumatism; and the 'Mediterranean Naturalist' asserts that the people of Malta have long been accustomed to expose themselves to be stung by bees for the cure of this painful disease, with excellent results. It is well known among our peasantry that any one who has been frequently stung feels no ill effect from further stings for years after, and this would seem to afford an opening for medical investigation into the properties and uses of the bee-poison. Certain scents appear to madden bees; one of these is a sweating horse, which is so obnoxious to them that it has happened not infrequently that horses tied up near a hive or a nest of wild-bees have been attacked furiously, and if not cut loose quickly, have been stung to death.

Whether the bees of South Africa are peculiarly savage or hypersensitive, we do not know; but many instances of horses stung to death are recorded from that part of the world. They certainly seem to be very easily offended, for we have been told of an instance in which a mischievous little naked Kaffir boy chewed a carrot and spat it out at the door of a hive; whereupon the bees immediately attacked him, and would inevitably have killed him, had not the gardener thrown him into a trench he was digging and covered him up quickly with earth; and it may be here remarked that fresh mould is one of the best known remedies for the stings of bees or wasps.

When, therefore, American apiculturists propose to deprive bees of their stings by crossing them with the wild stingless bees, of which at least two distinct species are known in America, it would seem as though they were working for a noble object. 'If we had a race of stingless bees,' they say, 'the value of the honey crop would be doubled.' But it is well to pause and deliberate before attempting to deprive the insect of the formidable weapon provided for it by nature.

Bees have many enemies, and therefore undoubtedly require a defensive weapon; but there is reason to suppose that the sting is something more than that.

It is acknowledged that stingless bees are not much good as honey-gatherers, and Lumboltz, the Swedish naturalist, says of the honey produced by the stingless bees of Australia, that it causes diarrhoea, and is sour and soon fermented because the bees have no poison to preserve it. Probably, therefore, if our bees should be deprived of their stings, the honey made by them would be worthless instead of gaining in value; for the sting apparently is not only a weapon of offence and defence, but an alembic in which is distilled a subtle fluid, a drop of which is added to each cell of honey before it is sealed, and which, although poisonous when injected into the blood of man or other animal, is essential not only to the well-being of the insect, but also to the wholesomeness of the food provided for its own use and that of its progeny, and which is so unscrupulously appropriated by omnivorous man. The value of the sting to the bee is exemplified by the fact recorded by Darwin, that since the introduction of the common hive-bees into Australia they have almost exterminated the native stingless species.

In these days of cheap sugar we can hardly appreciate the extreme importance of honey and the honey-bee to the ancients. The land flowing with milk and honey loses half its significance to those who look upon honey as a dainty desired chiefly by children; and notwithstanding the great revival of bee-keeping of late, it is extremely doubtful whether the public taste will ever return to its ancient delight in that which has become a luxury instead of a necessity. The Americans say the consumption of honey in the United States is only eight ounces per annum for each person, because people have not yet learned the use of it; and English bee-keepers complain that they are overstocked and cannot sell all their produce; and yet it is affirmed that a good deal of artificial honey and honeycomb finds its way into the market.

Much of the honey which in Switzerland is an invariable accompaniment to the breakfast of bread, butter, and coffee, is said to be spurious; yet with the rows upon rows of beehives everywhere, and the abundance of mountain flowers, one would suppose the manufacture of artificial honey to be quite unnecessary; but in the presugar era, the making of false honey was an art recorded by Herodotus with praise. It was the confectioners of Callatebus, on the Mæander, who thus secured fame to themselves by manufacturing honey from tamarisk and wheat. The ingredients now employed by artificial-honey makers are not made public, but honey supposed to be gathered by bees from certain flowers exclusively, is largely advertised as remedial for various diseases. Thus, eucalyptus honey is much used in America as a cure for consumption, and so is that made from horehound, but probably in both cases the medicinal properties are added by human manipulators. Tennyson writes of the 'honey of poison-flowers;' but we never heard of any one having been poisoned by honey, although that made from the euphorbia in South Africa is hot and disagreeable to the taste, and probably unwhole-

some; and the honey made in India from the flowers of the rhododendron is said to be poisonous; so that we may infer that the qualities of the flowers rifled are to a certain extent imparted to the honey, which undoubtedly varies considerably in flavour. The honey of Mount Hymettus, so famous of old, is still most delicious, and so is the heather-honey of Scotland.

When, therefore, apiculturists have succeeded in breeding a race of bees able to suck the nectar from the red clover, our honey will doubtless be improved in flavour. The Ligurian bees are said to possess the desired length of proboscis, and if these are the bees of Hymettus, we may perhaps have a clue to the excellence of their product. British bee-keepers have long imported Ligurian queen-bees, with the view of improving our native stock, but so far the success of the experiment remains uncertain.

It is hard, indeed, to realise the fact that for thousands of years the whole world depended entirely upon the product of the honey-bee for all the sweetness required in cookery. The numerous allusions to honey in the Bible and among classical writers will be familiar to many people; and among the most ancient of British pottery, antiquaries find perforated vessels, supposed to have been used for straining honey. But perhaps it is not generally known that some ancient peoples used honey for embalming; and it is related that an inquisitive antiquary, on discovering a large jar or pot of honey in some ancient excavations, tasted it with his finger, and found a hair adhering to his tongue; and further investigation revealed the fact that this was one of the coffins containing an embalmed body; and the honey therein, notwithstanding the use to which it had been put, had retained its flavour for many centuries.

A nest of wild-bees is still a lucky find among natives, and travellers do not disdain to share the feast with them, whilst the stings of the despoiled owners do not trouble them, for they know that a little smoke will stupefy the bees and make them harmless. The Hindus feed their new-born babes with honey and ghee for luck; and the custom which once prevailed everywhere, of telling the hive-bees whenever a death occurred in the family of the owner, and of tying a piece of crape to the hive to put them in mourning, lest they should forsake those who had not treated them with proper respect, has not yet died out among our peasantry, and carries us back to the time when bees were among the most valuable possessions of the agriculturist, a fact still preserved in the proverb, 'A swarm of bees in May is worth a load of hay.' At that time, no one knew anything about Ligurian queens or the fertilisation of red clover; and had any one proposed to modify the proboscis of the bee or to breed a race of stingless bees, he would have been laughed at as a madman.

'What is sweeter than honey?' said the expounders of Samson's riddle, in answer to which modern chemists have put forth saccharine; but the intense sweetness of this chemical extract will never supersede sugar and honey, for the flavour is not agreeable to the palate of men; and even wasps and bees, fond as they are of sweet things, reject saccharine with disdainful fury, and will buzz angrily about anything sweetened

therewith without touching it, as though they felt themselves defrauded of their lawful perquisites, and were wroth with those who would try to deceive them.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DESERT.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

ROBERT was scarcely surprised at the unwelcome appearance of his half-brother. He had all along suspected that he had overheard his conversation with his sister relative to the search for Jim Turner, and naturally would have kept a watch on his movements. He therefore accepted the situation without much comment; but as soon as he could get away without exciting suspicion, made his way to the telegraph office. Here he wired to Owen at Bendabar, giving him the clue of the rocky bar and all other details furnished by Turner. He asked him to follow the search up at once, and if successful, to keep the papers until his arrival, and restore the spot where they were found to its original state, as though it had been undisturbed. This done, he felt more at ease.

He knew that Alf would soon get all he wanted to know out of poor, simple Jim; and he was not at all sure that he did not intend to play him some trick on the way up and get ahead of him. The four hundred miles to the station were, however, negotiated without any mishap. He did not trust himself to exchange glances with Owen, lest Alf's sharp eyes should note it; but as soon as there was an opportunity, the manager told him that he had been quite successful. The papers were still in the tin; but Robert begged his friend to keep them where they were until the farce of a search had been gone through.

Next morning, they started down the river; and Jim Turner soon identified the spot where they were camped when Burgess appeared. Needless to say, the search—extended into the next day—was fruitless. The general conclusion was that if Burgess had buried anything, it had been only just beneath the surface, and the tin was probably soon laid bare. In that case, the first bush-fire that swept over the spot would destroy the contents.

Alf did not seem at all elated at the fact that nothing had transpired; and Robert guessed that the state of uncertainty was worse to him than the discovery of the hidden tin would have been.

Jim Turner was rewarded; and Alf took his leave, Robert announcing his intention of spending a few days with his friend Owen. From something he noticed in Alf's manner, he mistrusted the fact that he had really left the station, and believed that his suspicions had been aroused by the non-discovery of anything, and that he was still keeping a watch on his movements. So impressed was he with this idea, that it was not until he retired and locked himself in his bedroom that he commenced his investigations. The tin had preserved its contents with wonderful fidelity. On lifting the lid, the papers appeared to be in almost as good a state of preservation as when first placed there. There were three folded papers and a small note-book.

He opened the folded papers. They were all in his brother Sam's writing, in pencil, and, by a strange coincidence, he read them in their proper sequence. The first was addressed to himself, and ran: 'DEAR BOB—We have had bad luck, and worst of all, I have met with an accident that has crippled me. I am just scribbling this to say good-bye in case things take a turn for the bad. If I don't turn up again, you know how to act for the good of all at home.' Then followed some affectionate messages to his mother and sisters.

The second paper bore date the next day, and was but a few lines: 'Burgess has come back. I am much worse, in awful pain; shall never leave here. Thank God, I am not deserted by everybody.'

The third and last was almost illegible; the reader managed to decipher: 'Burgess will tell—too bad—I had forgiven—now left here—die.' The rest was unintelligible.

Robert dropped the message from the dead man whose bones lay in the desert. His half-brother's name was not mentioned; but he read the whole story as though it had been printed. Sam had met with an accident, and Alf had left him to get on as best he could. But what was the accident? and how did he meet with it? The note-book would tell him that.

He took it up and opened it. Just then all the dogs on the station commenced to bark furiously, as though some one was coming. He opened his window and looked out; but all seemed quiet; and after a fight among themselves, the dogs subsided into silence.

He commenced the note-book, wherein Burgess had, as he said, told the true story of Sam's death.

'I promised Sam Patten when he was dying that I would tell the truth; and I swore to Alf, after he saved my life from the blacks, that I would not. I will write it all down; hide it, and never speak of it again. I don't know what to do. From the start, Alf Patten made himself disagreeable; and although Sam stood it very quietly for some time, at last he quarrelled with him; and after that, there was nothing but rows between them. The morning we found five of the horses poisoned, they had the worst quarrel. Alf was away, when we camped the night before, and he blamed his brother for not noticing the poison-plant about. While they were still at it, the black boy and I started after two of the horses that had strayed away. While we were tracking them up, we both thought we heard a pistol-shot in the direction of the camp. When we got back with the horses, we found that there had been an accident. Sam, while doing something to his revolver, had accidentally touched the trigger and shot himself through the hand. That was the story they told us. It was a clean wound; and I did not think it would turn out bad. We had good country and easy travelling for a day or two, and Sam's hand seemed getting on very well; then we had a long dry stage and hot weather. Sam's hand took a sudden turn for the worse, and when we got to some good water and grass, he said he could go no farther, but must stay there until his hand was easier. Ever since that morning, the brothers had not spoken, and Sam would not let his brother help him in

any way. We spent three days at the water-hole; and the rest and plenty of cold-water bandages did the wound good. Alf had been getting very impatient, and at last he said that we had come nearly as far as we wanted to, and seen most of the country they had come to look at; that the best thing to do was for Sam to stop in the camp, while we went on about fifty miles farther, and then we could go home by easy stages. This meant that we should be away from Sam for nearly three days; and I would not agree to it. But Sam himself persuaded me; he was anxious to get home, and thought that by the time we got back he would be able to ride, and there would be nothing to detain us. We started the next morning. While we were packing and saddling the horses, Alf went up and spoke to his brother. Whatever it was he said, the quarrel broke out again at once; and when we started, Alf had gone back to one of his fiendish tempers. We went about thirty miles that day, and camped. The next morning, as we were starting, I asked Patten how far we were going before turning back. He said: "Right on to the Overland Telegraph Line." I pulled up, and said I would go no farther, but would return to the camp. He argued with me that Sam was all right, and even tried to threaten me; but I rode away, and he and the black boy went on.

'I got back to camp that evening, and found Sam very bad. I think the excitement of the quarrel with his brother had inflamed the wound again. Next morning he was in terrible agony, and his arm was swollen right up to the shoulder. He was delirious, and kept praying me to cut his arm off. I never left his side except to get water to keep the bandages wet. The next afternoon he suddenly fell asleep, but woke up just at sundown. He was quite sensible, and had no pain at all; only, he said, "he felt too weak to move." He talked to me quietly about going back, thinking, now the pain had left him, he would be strong enough to ride in the morning. He told me that his wound was not an accident, but that his brother in a fit of passion had threatened him with his revolver; that he had tried to take it from him, and in the struggle it had gone off and shot him through the hand. He never meant to say anything about it, but for his brother going away and leaving him; and asked me to tell the true story if anything happened to him, and I promised. Presently, he said to me: "This is heavenly to be free from that terrible pain; I shall sleep so soundly to-night, old man." He never spoke again. I scarcely know when he died, but I think it was about an hour afterwards.

'Next morning, I was digging a grave as best I could, when Alf and the black boy came up. They had been riding all night. He was like a madman when he saw Sam's body, called himself a murderer, and vowed that he would go back and give himself up to be hanged. After Sam was buried, this fit seemed to wear off; and next morning we started home. We scarcely ever spoke during the next few days. Once he asked me what story I was going to tell when we got in, and I said, "The true one." A week after Sam's death we got to the Herbert River, and camped near a water-hole. Suddenly the place seemed alive with blacks, and a shower of spears

and "nullas" fell around us. The black boy was speared clean through the body; but I only got a crack with a nulla. I used my revolver, and made a rush for a carbine that was lying where I had been sleeping; but before I got there, I was knocked down, and the niggers rushed in and got hold of me. Another moment, and my brains would have been beaten out; but just then Alf came to my relief, and saved me. The black boy was dead. That night, when we were talking it over, Alf said: "I think I saved your life to-day, Burgess. Poor Sam is dead and gone, and it will do no good raking up our quarrel; cannot you hold your tongue when you get in?" Of course he had saved my life, and I scarcely knew what to say. "How shall we account for Sam's death?" I said at last. "He was killed here by the blacks," he replied, pointing back to where the fight had been. So it fell out that I agreed. He swore that he intended to go away and change his name, rather than face going home; and I promised to tell the story we made up that night. Next morning, we parted. He took three horses and most of the rations, as he intended to make for the Overland Telegraph Line; and I took the two worst horses, to try and get in to the nearest station. They died on the road, and I have walked in. I do not know whether I have done right or wrong; but this is the truth. With this book I bury three letters that Sam wrote and gave to me. Alf knows nothing of them."

It was all out now; and Robert knew that every word was plain truth. He could see his half-brother in every line of the confession—the outbreaks of uncontrollable temper followed by fits of short-lived remorse. Doubtless, when he parted from Burgess he fully intended to keep his vow, and be henceforth a dead man to those who had known him. But time had blunted his feelings of regret; his character had degenerated; he had grown tired of his self-imposed exile, and the death of Burgess had been too great a temptation to return, removing as it did the only witness to his crime; for although no laws could touch him, he was as guilty of his half-brother's death as if he had shot him through the head.

What was he to do? He looked up, and started; there, pressed close against the glass of the window, was the face of his half-brother. The expression on it arrested Robert in the act of rising. He scarcely knew whether he was gazing at a living face or a dead one, it wore such a ghastly look. While he was hesitating, it vanished. Robert went to the window, which was an ordinary French light, opening on to the veranda, unlocked it, and was about stepping out, when he paused. A meeting between them just then had better be avoided; evidently, Alf's uneasy conscience had dragged him back; he knew now that Robert knew the truth, and he could do no more harm. He stood at the door and listened. There was a sudden outbreak from the dogs; then he heard the sound of a horse cantering down the paddock. The nocturnal visitor was gone. But Robert's way was no clearer; and he passed a wretched sleepless night.

On the third day, a man rode up to the station with a note for Robert. It was from Alf, and ran thus: "Whatever Burgess wrote is true. I

know you found the papers, and have read them. I am going a long way out West, and this time I shall not return.—Good-bye."

The writing was so unlike Alf's hard firm hand, that Robert instinctively asked the man, who was the hostler at a small public-house some thirty miles away, whether his brother had been drinking heavily.

"He went it pretty hot for a couple of days," returned the man; "but he seemed all right when he started this morning."

"He had gone, then?"

"Yes; started the same time that I did. He said he was going to Burr Downs to-night," naming a station to the westward.

Robert pondered over the communication. Was it reality this time, and did it point to a suicide's expiation?

He determined to follow. Turner was still on the station, having taken a place as boundary-rider, so he engaged him to accompany him; and Owen provided him with a black boy, a good tracker; for there was no knowing how far he might have to go. By the time he was ready, Alf had three days' start of him.

It was easy enough to follow him, for he was making due west from station to station, and travellers were not very common as they got into the sparsely settled outside district. He could not gain on him, however; at every station where he stopped the night, Alf had always left just the three days before. The last place they crossed, the Herbert, Robert thought he recognised the water-hole where the blacks had attacked Burgess; but all tokens of the fierce fight had long been dispersed by successive floods.

At last they came to the most outside station, within about fifty miles of the Queensland border. Beyond was still unsettled country for about three hundred miles to the Overland Telegraph Line. Alf had stayed the night at this place, and next morning he had gone on by himself, leaving the people on the place in some perplexity as to where he was bound to. From thence out Robert knew they would have to follow his tracks. Once in the unoccupied country, this was comparatively easy, and they went on the first day without a check. Robert knew as well as if Alf had told him that their destination was Sam's lonely grave; would he get there too late?

They camped the first night at a small hole of water at the head of a rocky creek. Next morning, still following the tracks of the two horses, they crossed a low range and emerged on to a wide plain. By night they found themselves on a small clay flat with tired and thirsty horses. They had water for themselves in their canvas bags; but unless there was some ahead, their horses would not last through another day of such fatiguing travelling.

Alf had, however, camped on the flat, so it was evident that he was making for some place ahead that he knew of.

On again the next morning. Straight across the plain went the tracks, and with jaded horses the party followed them. When within about a mile of the creek, the black boy, who was ahead tracking, pulled up and pointed to the trees. Half-a-dozen kites were circling slowly in the

air over a particular spot, looking like black specks in the distance. 'There's water there,' said Turner. Robert did not answer, but motioned to the boy, and they pressed on. In a short time they rode up to the bank of the creek, in the bed of which was a shallow pool of water. The loose horses ran down and commenced greedily drinking; two others, who were feeding on the edge of the water-hole, greeted them with loud whinnies. A glance told Robert he was too late. He motioned to Turner and the boy to go on to the water, and dismounting, tied the reins to his stirrup iron, and let his thirsty horse go loose after the rest.

A man was lying at the foot of a coolibah tree. He might have been asleep; but people as a rule do not sleep in the noontide glare of a tropical sun. It was his brother, dead by his own hand. On the tree, at the foot of which he lay, a sheet of bark had been stripped off years before, and on the surface of the wood beneath, the initials S. P. had been rudely cut. Robert at once divined that the letters had been carved by Burgess, and beneath was Sam's grave.

They buried the lifeless form that had once held such fierce conflicting passions, by the side of the man whose death lay at his door; and in the grave Robert placed the written testimonies of the expiated guilt. The Message that had come from the Desert was left to moulder there; no man now would ever know it. All himself had solved for Robert the question of what he should do with the knowledge bequeathed him by the dead.

Next morning, with a saddened heart, the only surviving brother retraced his steps through the untrampled waste that surrounded the two graves. In after-years, when wife and children were his, and prosperity and contentment, his thoughts would often be recalled by a chance word to that time; and like a picture would rise clearly before him the scene he saw as he turned in his saddle for a last look. The gaunt and desolate plain; the creek, bordered with dwarfed, distorted timber; the soaring, tireless kites; the fierce sun overhead, beating down on the graves of his brothers beneath the stunted, shadeless, coolibah tree.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ONE of the most interesting matters brought forward at the recent meeting of the British Association was a demonstration of the isolation of fluorine. Six years ago this element was isolated in France; but the results had not been confirmed in this country. The apparatus required for the demonstration is furnished with platinum electrodes, through which a current is passed into a compound containing the fluorine. As a result, hydrogen is given off at one electrode; and fluorine, in the form of an almost colourless gas, at the other. The action of fluorine upon various substances is remarkable—silicon, boron, sulphur, and various metals igniting and burning brilliantly directly they come within its reach.

Those who have been led to hope that a balloon will represent the flying machine of the future have usually pinned their faith upon a screw propeller as the best means of urging it through the air. Some experiments in this direction have recently been made by M. Mallett the results of which have been presented to the French Academy. With a screw having a diameter of seven and a half feet, and with a velocity of one hundred revolutions per minute, this experimenter succeeded in raising the balloon three hundred and thirty-three feet high in the same time—that is, one minute. Repetitions of the experiment invariably gave the same results. Unfortunately, no particulars are given of the kind of motor used in accomplishing this astonishing result.

The phenomenon known as 'bleeding bread' has, according to a correspondent of *Nature*, made its appearance in this country during the recent hot weather. It is an organism which appears on bread, boiled potatoes, rice puddings, and other farinaceous compounds, in the form of red stains, which resemble splashes of blood. It was first noticed in this country in the year 1853, when an account of it was communicated to the British Microscopical Society. It is only seen during periods of high temperature, and is sufficiently rare to give rise to superstitious notions, which, in spite of Board schools, are still rife enough in country districts.

At the Congress of photographers recently held in London, the most interesting item was a demonstration of M. Lippman's method of producing photographs in colour. Some months ago, specimens of this process were shown in Paris; but the method of exhibiting them has been since improved by M. Lumiere. The colours are due to what is known as *interference* phenomena, and are produced in the photographic film in the following manner: a specially prepared gelatine plate, bearing an almost transparent film, is placed with its sensitive surface in contact with a tank of mercury, and exposure to light-action through a lens is made through the back of the plate. The projected rays of light meeting the reflected rays from the brilliant quicksilver give rise to interference colours in the resulting photograph. Such colours can only be seen on the film when the plate is held at a certain angle, and they resemble and are analogous to the iridescent tints on mother-of-pearl. Viewed in this way they are ineffective; but when placed, according to M. Lumiere's suggestion, in the beam of a powerful electric arc light, and a reflection from the coloured surface is thrown upon a screen by the aid of a lens, the result is very brilliant. The experiment is a most interesting one, the colours produced approximating to those of nature.

Another very different method by which photographs are associated with colour is now to some extent superseding the old chromo-lithographic process. The method is strictly mechanical, and has nothing whatever to do with the solution of the colour-photography problem. Three printing blocks are made by the Meisenbach half-tone process, by which the original photograph is cut up into printable lines and dots. But each block is made from a negative, which takes cognisance of only one colour in the original design—red, yellow, or blue, the so-called 'primary' colours of

the old text-books. This is brought about by using in conjunction with the camera differently coloured screens, which will only admit rays of one colour to pass to the sensitive surface within. Each of these blocks is printed from in turn with its own coloured ink, the three images being superposed upon one another, and the general effect produced is that of a chromo-lithograph printed from a number of stones. The specimens which we have seen are exceedingly satisfactory; but it remains to be seen if equally good work can be turned out in bulk.

Another matter of photographic interest is the establishment in London of the first of a series of annual Exhibitions under the title of the 'Photographic Salon.' The object of the promoters is to exhibit the artistic capabilities of photography, putting its scientific and commercial aspects entirely aside. The pictures hung are about three hundred in number, and have been selected for their artistic merit. They are quite a revelation to those whose standard of photographic excellence is borrowed from ordinary sources. Both portraiture and landscape are represented here with an artistic and, in many cases, a poetic feeling which most persons would think quite unattainable with a camera. The Exhibition is unique, and it has attained a deserved success. All will look forward to the reopening of the Photographic Salon in the autumn of 1894.

According to a paper recently brought before the Association of Belgian Chemists, certain continental bakers mix soap with their dough, in order, it is said, to make their bread and pastry light. The soap is dissolved in water, and to this a little oil is added, the mixture being subsequently whipped into an emulsion, which is added to the flour. The idea of soap as an edible substance is not a pleasant one, but possibly the bakers referred to are particular to obtain a pure kind. Genuine oleate of soda, which is made by combining caustic soda with vegetable oil, would not be altogether objectionable; but we should be inclined to prefer home-made bread of the old-fashioned unsophisticated kind.

We are informed by a correspondent that some time ago the Geneva Library became possessed of a collection of unopened Egyptian papyri, which on being carefully manipulated and examined by M. Nicole, were found to be of great interest and value. They include a fragment of the *Orestes* of Euripides, which is believed to be at least one thousand years older than any other manuscript of the same work at present known. There are also portions of the *Iliad*, containing great variations from the usually accepted text. The collection also contains an Idyll on Jupiter and Leda, and an Elegy on the Stars. A curious document is a letter from the head of a monastery requesting the use for three months of certain horses. The animals were to aid the monks in getting about the country; and as an inducement for granting the request it is urged by the borrowers that 'they are orthodox.' There are other interesting items in this valuable collection of papyri.

It will be remembered by many that the late Mr Richard A. Proctor, who did perhaps more than any other writer to popularise the science of astronomy, died five years ago in New York

city of yellow fever, which disease he contracted in Florida. His grave remained neglected until a newspaper urged the claims of the deceased writer upon its readers. The response was quick; and a handsome monument has been erected to the astronomer's memory, adorned by a noble inscription, the work of his great friend, Herbert Spencer. There are many in this country who, without personal knowledge of Mr Proctor, have read his books or attended his lectures, and these will be glad to know that his memory is preserved in this manner by our English-speaking cousins across the sea.

The 'telegraph' which is placed on all steamships for communicating the captain's orders to the engine-room by means of a bell, dial, and pointer, is now, we understand, being adopted for street vehicles, so as to avoid the necessity of the occupant leaning out of the window and giving verbal directions to his driver. The new device consists of duplicate dials and pointers with such directions as 'Stop,' 'Go on,' 'Turn to the Right,' and so on, one being within the vehicle and one outside, both working synchronously.

Another comfort for travellers is the provision of reading lamps on the penny-in-the-slot principle, which are presently to be placed on some of our railways. On the District Railway, London, two thousand five hundred lamps will be required, and the carriages are being now wired for their reception. The lamps are electric, and the act of dropping in a penny will set a clock in motion for half an hour, during which time the current will be switched on to the lamp, and will concentrate a light of twenty candle-power upon the newspaper or book of the passenger who expends the coin.

Mr G. J. Symons, F.R.S., to whom the public is much indebted for his constant meteorological observations, has lately made some references to the rainfall during 1893, which will interest many. We all know that the year has been a remarkably dry one, and unless its closing weeks should bring with them tempests and floods, it will probably prove to be the driest on record. For thirty-five years Mr Symons has made constant observations of rainfall and other weather phenomena, and he tells us that only once has he previously registered the rainfall of four consecutive months at less than an inch each, and then it was winter-time and at the end of two exceptionally rainy years. For more than thirty years no year has been so dry as the seven months ending October last, and this applies both to London and the country generally.

It has been announced that the Manchester Ship Canal will be formally opened throughout its entire length on the first day of the new year, when ships will be able to find their way from the Mersey to the Manchester Docks. Every one will wish this bold and costly enterprise the success which it undoubtedly deserves.

We have more than once alluded to the value of finger-prints as a means of identification, and our readers will possibly be interested in knowing that the system has been adopted in the Indian army. The Order issued by the authorities is as follows: 'It is requested that as a means of identification of recruits for the native army, examining medical officers will cause an impres-

sion in printer's ink of the ends of the first three fingers of the right hand of each recruit passed by them as fit for the service to be made on the Nominal Roll opposite the name of the recruit; and in the case of the Army Hospital Corps, on the Verification Roll.' This innovation is mainly due to the exertions of Mr Francis Galton, who, it will be remembered, read a paper on the subject of 'Identification by Finger-marks' at the recent meeting of the British Association at Nottingham.

An incandescent arc lamp—by which is meant the combination in the lamp of the main features of the electric arc and the glow lamp—was described at the recent Electrical Congress at Chicago. The two carbons between which the arc is formed, which must be of very fine quality, are enclosed in a glass globe which is highly refractory. At the top and bottom this globe is closed with plugs, through which the carbons pass; and there is a safety-valve provided, which prevents any undue pressure upon the internal walls of the vessel. When the arc is once established, the enclosed oxygen is consumed; and the remaining gas mixed with carbon vapour becomes so luminous that the arc itself is almost invisible. Economy is claimed for this system both in the amount of current required, and in the saving of carbon rods, which consume less rapidly than if they were exposed to the air.

Some months ago we described how the buildings of the World's Fair at Chicago were being painted without brushes by means of a gigantic spray apparatus. A somewhat similar plan, it is said, has been adopted for the application of whitewash to ceilings. First of all, the whitewash is very carefully screened or filtered into a barrel, to which is attached the suction-pipe of a double-acting force-pump. With a pressure of one hundred pounds on the square inch, the mixture was pumped into the delivery tube, and discharged through a hole not more than one-sixteenth of an inch in diameter. The whitewash is thus sent aloft in a very finely divided form, ladders, scaffolding, and extra labourers being dispensed with, while a saving of expense all round is secured.

Our contemporary, *Knowledge*, calls attention to the peculiar eye-trouble common among hop-pickers which goes by the name of 'hop-pickers' ophthalmia.' It is ascribable to the microscopic hairs which cover the leaf of the hop, and which, it is thought, may possibly partake in a small degree of the properties of the nearly related stinging nettle.

The uses of steel are constantly increasing, and one of the most interesting of its applications is that of bell-casting. Hitherto, the bell-founder has relied upon bell-metal, which is an alloy of copper and tin; but cast-steel has recently been employed for the purpose, at a great saving of cost. It does not seem, however, that the tone of the new bells is quite equal to that of the old, and it is believed that some way of improving the steel for this purpose may be discovered.

The cycle is said to be threatened with a formidable rival in the shape of a pneumatic road skate, which will shortly be placed upon the market by a Scotch firm. The new skate, instead of having four wheels, like the ordinary roller

skate, has only two, which are placed in line one behind the other, and are not solid, but furnished with pneumatic tires. With this aid to locomotion, it is said that ordinary roads can be traversed with ease, and that the ascent and descent of hills are by no means difficult. The skates have been already seen in some of the Midland towns, where a speed of from six to seven miles an hour has been attained with them in the ordinary thoroughfares. Simple pedestrianism, it would seem, may soon go out of fashion.

A machine for typewriting musical characters has recently been invented and exhibited by Mr F. H. Bowen of Springfield, U.S.A. In outward appearance it looks like the ordinary Remington typewriter, and can, it is said, be as easily manipulated. It will impress the notes, &c., on paper already ruled with the five lines of the musical stave, or will print the lines itself as the work proceeds. The machine should be of use to those who find a difficulty in writing music legibly, and we fear that there are many musicians who labour under this disadvantage.

Many are the serious accidents which have occurred from bottles bursting or breaking while being uncorked or unstoppered, and this has been especially the case since mineral waters have been bottled in receptacles which require heavy pressure to release the marbles or other devices by which they are closed. A Safety Bottle-opener, which has been devised by Mr W. Fletcher of Denby, near Derby, is, therefore, an opportune and valuable invention. It consists of a kind of semi-canister, which fits over the neck and shoulders of the bottle, containing at its apex a movable stopper, which can be pressed down while the hand is protected by the canister-like casing.

It is well known that the maintenance of large areas of glass on high buildings gives rise to constant trouble and expense, and we fancy that the yearly bill for repairs at such a building as the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, must be of enormous proportions. Breakage, as well as the evident danger to people beneath, will be obviated by a new device which is said to be practicable, and not costly. The glass during manufacture is moulded upon steel-wire netting, so that it is furnished with a strong skeleton, so to speak. The new material can during manufacture be bent without much difficulty, and it is obvious that it can be used in much larger squares than ordinary glass. A somewhat similar material, consisting of a transparent varnish which filled up the interstices in wire-work, was brought forward some time ago, but it intercepted much light, and was inflammable in its nature.

The experience of the past summer, when wasps were unusually and most unpleasantly plentiful, has shown that some persons are peculiarly susceptible to the poisonous sting of these insects. A case was recently reported in the *Lancet*, where a man, fifty-six years of age, was stung by a wasp on the middle finger of the left hand. He was admitted to a hospital, for he had become faint, and pains extended up his arm and all over his body. Severe rigor followed, accompanied by sickness and other distressing symptoms. The pulse became very feeble, and the temperature rose above the

normal. The man ultimately recovered ; but the case shows that a wasp must be avoided by certain individuals as most persons would avoid a poisonous snake.

A SOUTH ATLANTIC MYSTERY.

THE 'Enterprise,' outward bound to New Zealand, was rippling through the deep blue waters of the South Atlantic Ocean, with a light breeze from the south-west, which kept her moving at the rate of four knots an hour. Here and there the dancing waves were crested with a dash of creamy froth ; and a long streak of gray light was showing itself amidst the clouds in the distant east, as the dusky night slowly and reluctantly gave place to dawn. Presently, an old quartermaster lurched sleepily along the deck and peered down the companion hatch at the cabin timepiece. Finding that it was four o'clock, he returned forward with a livelier step and struck eight bells. The clear chimes echoed in the keen frosty air with a silver-like intonation ; the shrill notes of the boatswain's whistle were heard rousing up the men of the port watch ; the hands came aft to muster ; lookout and helmsman were relieved ; the starboard watch went below ; and then the decks became again deserted, as though the momentary bustle and life and movement were but caused by the magic wave of an enchanter's wand. In a few minutes the only audible sounds were the occasional rattling of the wheel-chains, and the mournful creaking of the yards as the vessel swayed gently to the long heave of the Atlantic billows.

In the meantime the chief-officer had made his appearance on deck, and was standing with the second at the break of the poop. After receiving the usual information about the course, the number of sails set, &c., and commenting upon the state of the weather, he suddenly started a conversation, the subject of which had evidently been in the thoughts of both of them before.

'I can't understand it,' he said. 'Here are we in the fifty-fourth degree of south latitude, and the skipper is still making a southerly course. We shall be down amongst the ice soon. I shall give him a hint about it when he takes sights after breakfast.'

The second-mate looked cautiously around, as though to make sure that no one else was within hearing, and leaning close over to the chief-officer, said in a low voice : 'Have you noticed anything strange about the captain's manner lately, Mr Wilson ? He was always quiet and standoffish like ; but during the last few days he has spoken and acted at times in such a strange way that I have sometimes fancied he was—a little'—Here the second mate touched his forehead significantly.

'Well,' replied the mate, after a pause, 'I don't mind admitting that I have noticed it for some weeks past ; but I thought it best to keep quiet, in case I was mistaken.—But don't breathe a

word to a soul, for those fits of abstraction may only be a peculiarity of his, after all.'

'But the strange look in his eyes'—insisted the second-mate.

'Mr Martin, we must not jump to hasty conclusions,' returned the chief. 'What I want first of all to find out is—why are we steering so far to the southward ?'

'I hope he'll give a satisfactory reason,' replied Martin as he turned to go below ; 'for I've made nine voyages to the colonies, and was never so far south before.'

At seven o'clock the captain came on deck, and after exchanging a few words with the chief-officer, walked to the starboard side and looked long and earnestly towards the southern point of the horizon. He was a tall, fine-looking man, with a sunburnt and rather handsome face, a square, resolute-looking jaw, and long iron-gray hair, a lock of which, in moments of excitement, he had a curious habit of twisting round his fingers. But the eyes, which were of a steely gray and very piercing, were the distinctive feature of his face, principally on account of the singular expression which dwelt in them. It is hard to describe it—a sort of restless, eager look, as though for ever on the watch for some one or something that he had been long expecting to meet. His age, according to the ship's articles, was thirty-six, though he looked eight or ten years older ; and although usually of a somewhat reserved disposition, speaking little to his officers except on matters of duty, yet at times, when he 'came out of his shell,' as the second-mate expressed it, he could be a most agreeable companion, as he was fairly well read, and had visited many queer, out-of-the-way places in the remote corners of the earth. Professionally, he was as capable and gallant a seaman as ever trod a deck.

Having apparently satisfied himself that nothing was in sight, he took a few impatient turns up and down the quarter-deck, and then crossed over to where the chief-officer was standing.

'Mr Wilson,' he said, speaking very slowly, and regarding his chief-officer with a strange, steadfast look, 'I have something to tell you which will explain my reasons for taking a much more southerly course than is usual with outward-bound vessels. I was thinking the matter over last night, and then decided to take you into my confidence.'

There was something in Captain Roberts' manner and in the expression of his eyes that startled the chief-officer, and yet for the life of him he could not have told why. However, he said nothing, but inwardly wondering what it was the captain had to tell him, waited for him to proceed.

'It was in the year 1875, ten years ago now,' he began, 'that I was in command of a small steamer on the Australian coast. I had taken her out from England when she was new, and at the request of the owners, remained in her after our arrival at Adelaide. I had left my wife behind me in London ; but as, after a time I decided to make my home out in the colonies, I sent for her to join me. She sailed from

Liverpool in a barque called the "Lord Clive," on the 10th of December 1875; that vessel never arrived at her destination—only once, from that day to this, has she ever been heard of.' Here the captain paused, and stood for a few minutes gazing out to sea, as though lost in thought.

'Was the "Lord Clive" lost, sir?' the chief-officer ventured to inquire, finding the skipper still remained silent.

'They say so,' he replied. 'The last time she was seen, or at least spoken with, was by a whaler, in latitude fifty-four degrees south, and longitude ten degrees east, somewhere near the supposed position of the Bouvet Islands; though what she was doing there, I can't imagine, unless she had been driven out of her course by a succession of northerly gales. That was nine years and a half ago, and she has never been heard of since. The owners, underwriters, indeed everybody I have spoken with on the subject, seem convinced that she is lost; in fact, the captain's wife has married again; but I believe the "Lord Clive" is still afloat, and that my wife is on board of her—alive!'

The chief-mate started, and stared at his commander with astonishment, not unmingled with a slight feeling of alarm, for whatever doubts he may have previously had on the subject of the captain's sanity, it now became evident to him that on one subject at least he was mad. To suppose that a ship which had not been heard of for nine and a half years was still afloat, and people alive on board of her, struck the practical chief-officer as out of the bounds of reason.

'I went home to England,' continued Captain Roberts, and the tone of his voice showed that he was labouring under suppressed excitement, 'and interviewed the owners of the "Lord Clive," offering to take command of a ship without pay, if they would place one at my disposal, and go in search of her. But they would not listen to me, for by that time the insurance had been paid, and they took no further interest in the vessel's fate. I have made eight voyages out to the colonies since then—for I will never trade anywhere else, and I can't get command of a whaler—and every time, I go a long way to the southward in the hope of meeting the "Lord Clive," for I expect she got down amongst the ice and was frozen in. But some day she'll break away and drift out into the open sea again; and I should like to be the first to board that ship, to meet my wife, and welcome her back to the world once more. For she is not dead, sir, I tell you, Mr Wilson'—with an impatient stamp of his foot and a wild gleam in his eye—'she *can't* be dead; we only parted for a time—only for a time—and I feel as sure as I am standing here, that we shall meet again.'

'But not in this world,' muttered the chief-officer under his breath.

The captain turned to walk aft, but his steps were arrested by a shout from a man who was about some job on the main yard: 'Sail ho!'

'Where away?' roared the mate from the break of the poop.

'Broad on the starboard bow, sir,' replied the man.

The captain seized his glass from the companion hatch and hurried to the weather mizzen rigging, followed by Mr Wilson. On the utmost verge

of the horizon, where the gray-blue waters seemed to finish in a sharp clear-cut line against the paler sky, a small dash of white, barely the size of a sea-gull's wing, was visible. For the space of three minutes the captain gazed at it, then, closing his telescope with a snap, he took a few hurried paces on the deck. After a few moments of this restless kind of walk, he again pointed his telescope at the strange sail. 'We're rising her; don't you think so, Mr Wilson?' he exclaimed.

'It is scarcely possible to tell yet, sir,' replied Wilson, 'she has been in sight so short a time.'

'I am going below to examine the chart,' continued the captain; and despite the assumed calmness of his tone, it was evident that he was strongly excited. 'Keep her up a couple of points; we must overhaul yonder craft, for I want to speak her, and—if I am not on deck before—let me know when you can make out her hull.'

Two hours passed, and the 'Enterprise,' slipping smoothly and cleverly through the water, closed up to within three miles of the strange ship, which appeared to be drifting helplessly upon the ocean. She had only one rag of a sail, which fluttered heavily in the breeze, and her mizzen-mast and foretopmast were gone. As they drew still nearer, the chief officer was struck with the strange, dismantled appearance of her spars and rigging. Captain Roberts came on deck and looked thirstily at her through his telescope.

'Clear away the cutter!' he shouted, and the clear, sharp, intonation of his voice seemed to fetch an echo from the hollows of the sails.

The men came aft in obedience to the order, and as the second-mate went to see to the execution of it, he was stopped by the captain, who said: 'I shall want you in the boat with me, Mr Martin, and three picked men.'

'Very good, sir.'

The vessels were now within half a mile of each other, and the order was given to 'heave to!' The wind had died away to a light air with almost startling suddenness, but the horizon to the north-west was blurred and indistinct with a sort of gray, smoke-like haze.

While the boat was getting ready, the captain was pacing the deck with restless and feverish impatience, at times pausing in his hurried perambulation to gaze at the other vessel with an eager, longing look, as though on board of her he could see the form of some dearly loved person whom he had long been parted from. Presently he stepped up to the chief-officer, and touching him on the shoulder, pointed to the strange vessel, and in a voice trembling with excitement, said: 'Just look through your glass, Wilson, and see if you can make out anybody on her quarter-deck—a woman.'

'I can see nobody; the ship is evidently deserted,' the chief replied as he handed the telescope to the captain.

'Deserted! Man, are you blind? Can't you see the flutter of a woman's dress?' he cried, with fierce impatience. Then stretching out his arm, and pointing towards the drifting vessel: 'That ship is the "Lord Clive;" and my wife, I have every reason to believe, is there, sir. I saw her figure but this minute, and I should know

her even at this distance.—Yes, I have found her at last—I have found her at last!

Wilson's honest sunburnt face wore an expression of the utmost astonishment and pity, and he was about to make some sort of a reply, when the second-mate came aft and reported the boat as ready.

Captain Roberts without another word entered it and took his seat in the stern-sheets; but the chief-officer managed to convey a hint of the skipper's mad fancy to the second before the boat shoved off. 'Look well after him,' he whispered; 'for God knows what he will do when he finds no one on board that ship, as I feel confident will be the case.'

As they approached her, Martin observed that her hull was terribly weather-beaten—some shreds of sails hung from her topsail yards, and ragged ends of rigging and running gear hung over her side. There was ice, too, about her, although the thermometer was scarcely down to freezing-point, a pretty conclusive proof that she had but recently drifted up from the desolate frozen seas that encircle the South Pole. The captain occasionally muttered something to himself; his face was flushed, as though with some pleasurable anticipation, and his bright eyes burned with a wild light, but all the time he kept his gaze fixed upon the after-part of the dismantled barque.

Presently the boat swept under her counter; the name which had been painted on her stern was partially obliterated; but Martin's heart gave a big thump when he saw that the letters which remained—evidently the final ones, were—'IVE.' Was it the 'Lord Clive,' after all?

'In bow! Way enough!' he roared. They were alongside!

The captain swung himself lightly into the main chains, then climbed over the rail on to the deck. The second-officer was about to follow him, but the skipper waved him back. 'Wait until I call for you, Mr Martin,' he said; and then he disappeared. For about twenty minutes the boat's crew held alongside, but the captain made no sign, although at times they fancied they could hear him moving about the decks. Suddenly they were startled by a loud cry, which seemed to come from the cabin. Sharp and shrill it rang upon the air, with a note of grief and agony in the ghastly sound of it, such as might have been the last cry of a lost soul. Sailors are usually superstitious, and that awful scream, coming as it did from the heart, as it were, of that mysterious vessel, caused the sunburnt faces of the boat's crew to blanch with fear. Even the second-mate, who was a hard-headed practical man, felt an eerie feeling creeping over him, and it was some few minutes before he could muster up courage to leave the boat and try to find out the cause of that awe-inspiring cry; but after a short hesitation, he clambered up the side.

There was no sign of a living soul upon her decks, which had been swept nearly bare by the seas. A piece of canvas fluttered from the stump of the mizzen-mast, and it was probably that which Captain Roberts' mad fancy had transformed into a woman's dress, when he saw it from the deck of the 'Enterprise.' He had evidently gone down below; and Martin, as he stood by the

companion hatch of the deserted ship, had an inward feeling that he was about to assist at some weird tragedy.

Before going below, Martin took a look round the horizon, and what he saw there caused him more real apprehension than any of the undefined terrors of the mysterious ship. Away to the north-west the horizon was blotted out by a gray smother of vapour, which was rapidly spreading itself in all directions. There was considerably more weight in the swell, too, and the wind gave out a hollow moaning sound as it swept through the rigging. Martin rushed to the taffrail and shouted: 'Come on board here, one hand!'

In answer to his call, one of the men scrambled up on deck.

'Keep a lookout while I go below and search for the captain; and let me know before that smother gets too close on top of us,' pointing to the white mist that was steadily coming down on them.

'Ay, ay, sir!'

On descending the companion stairs, the second-mate found himself in a moderately sized saloon with sleeping cabins on either side, and some lockers aft by the stern ports. There was a table in the centre, and a skylight overhead which admitted enough light to enable him to see clearly. A small hatch was open on the star-board side aft, apparently leading to a sort of lazarette. By the side of this hatch a dark figure was lying, face downwards. It was Captain Roberts! Martin stooped down and lifted his arm, but it was limp and lifeless; he then turned him over and endeavoured to raise him to a sitting posture, but with a shudder he let him fall, for he was quite dead. What sudden shock had caused his death, cannot be told; but firmly grasped in his right hand he held a faded white shawl of some soft material, such as women wear over their shoulders, and his features were distorted by an expression of horror hard to be described. What had he seen?

Fancying he heard a slight rustling sound in the lazarette, Martin peered down the small hatch, but it was so pitch dark that he could see nothing. Was there anything down there that might help to solve the mystery? Just then the hoarse voice of the seaman was heard in a warning shout: 'Come on deck, Mr Martin, quick! or we shall be adrift!'

The second-officer rushed up the companion ladder on to the quarter-deck and cast one sharp look to windward. There was a dense bank of fog not much more than a mile distant, and a dark shadow on the sea showed that wind accompanied it.

'Come and help me to lift the captain up on deck,' he cried to the man who had been keeping watch.

'Where is he, sir?'

'In the cabin—lying there—dead!'

'Dead? Then the living come first, sir,' replied the man gruffly as he ran towards the side. 'If we don't clear out of this now, we shall lose our ship, and be cast adrift in this cursed hulk.' With that he climbed over into the boat.

The second-mate hesitated for a moment, scarcely knowing what course to pursue, when the seaman yelled to him again, in a voice half

wild with impatience and fear: 'Jump into the boat, Mr Martin, or we'll shove off.'

The words had scarcely left his lips, when the wind, with a sort of mocking shriek, swept through the rigging of the derelict, and a few moments later the fog was swirling all round them. Martin sprang over the side into the boat, and the men commenced pulling madly in the direction where the 'Enterprise' had last been seen. For five minutes they pulled on with all their strength, the sweat pouring down their faces, then they eased up a bit, and the man who was at the after-oar asked the second-mate if he could make out their vessel.

Martin strained his eyes to pierce the surrounding gloom, but was obliged to acknowledge that he could see no sign of either ship.

'Then, sir, we're hopelessly adrift now, without a drain of water or a mouthful of food,' cried the man, with a ring of passionate despair in the tone of his voice.

'Keep cool, my lads, and pull steadily on; we shall fetch the old "Enterprise" right enough,' said Martin.

At that moment a dull boom was heard right ahead.

'There goes a gun from our ship to show us our whereabouts,' sang out the second-mate; 'give way, my lads!'

The men pulled with a will; and five minutes later the 'Enterprise' loomed up out of the fog close aboard of them. A line was thrown, the boat hauled alongside, and in a few minutes they were all standing safely on her decks.

Martin reported to the chief-officer everything that had occurred; but as the wind and sea were rising fast, and the driving mist obscured everything from view, the only thing that could be done was to heave the ship to until the weather cleared a bit. All night long it continued to blow hard; but about nine o'clock the next morning the wind fell light again, and the fog lifted a little, although it was still very thick all round the horizon, and it was not possible to see a greater distance than two miles. All hands were on deck, peering into the dim obscurity, to get a glimpse of the derelict in which lay the body of their unfortunate captain; but to no purpose. About two o'clock in the afternoon it came on to rain heavily, beating all the life out of the wind, while the gray sea rose and fell with long sullen heavings. The 'Enterprise' still remained 'hove to,' as it was quite useless attempting a search while the weather remained so thick. So it continued all the following night, until shortly after daybreak on the second morning, when the rain ceased, the clouds and mists drifted away, as the sun rose gaily above a clear horizon. The whole wide expanse of ocean was now visible, and sharp-sighted men were despatched to the masthead on the lookout; but no sign either of ship or wreckage rewarded their search. A light breeze sprang up from the south-west, and for four days they cruised about those waters; then the chief-officer reluctantly abandoned the search as a hopeless one, and the 'Enterprise' proceeded on her voyage to New Zealand.

There can be little room for doubt that the derelict barque foundered during the gale of wind on that eventful night; and if indeed she was the ill-fated 'Lord Clive,' which, after nine

long years of imprisonment in the ice, had at last broken loose and drifted into the ocean highway, then the strange meeting between those two ships was more than a mere coincidence.

The men who were in the boat to this day declare that it was a woman's voice which uttered that startling cry; but whether their statement is correct, and what it was Captain Roberts saw in the barque's deserted cabin that left that expression of horror on his face, are mysteries deep and unfathomable as the ocean where he lies at rest.

A VIGIL.

Is this the dawn that slowly leaves
The shadowy bed so still and white,
And with its cool, soft touch unweaves
The fevered fancies of the night?

Is this the dawn?—Oh! love, you lie
So calm beside the taper's beam,
As though it were not you and I
Who laughed together in my dream;

While o'er the flowery way abreast,
We stopt along the springy lea,
Till outward to the closing west
Gold pathways led across the sea.

And all the purpling deeps of space,
And all eve's tender, softening shine
Were deeper, holier round your face,
Your face, my love, so close to mine.

And lo! your eyes looked o'er the bay
And shone so—two conflicting gleams,
Love's dawn, and the last glance of day
Met in a halo.—Love, it seems

Only a dream; your floating hair
Beam-billowed, and a dream your face,
Now morning takes us unaware,
And draws aside the shielding lace

Of night; and breathing early flowers,
Looks boldly on the placid lid,
And brightens all the unheeding showers
Of gold, wherein last night lay hid

Your hand upon my shoulder. Dear,
In thy long dream, sometimes, ere night,
Bend o'er me when the sky is clear,
And look against the western light!

WILLIAM WOODWARD.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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HAUNTED HOXTON.

A 'REMOTE, unfriended, melancholy, slow' quarter of London is Hoxton, lying in the north-east between Old Street and Kingsland. To the majority of West End people but a geographical expression, about which they have, save for one thing, the haziest ideas—two only, in fact: one, that it is a place beloved by the 'coster' interest, and full of cabbage leaves; the other, that one of the finest theatres in London exists in it, the 'Britannia,' which, some thirty years ago, Charles Dickens, in his uncommercial travels, brought under the notice of readers in general. Thus much is known of Hoxton, and little more, save for the reason already mentioned, which is, that Mr Besant has laid one of the scenes of one of his most charming novels there, and has, with his usual accuracy, described the Hoxton of the present day in its habit as it lives.

What he has done we do not propose imperfectly to attempt, except to say that once a village lying outside London, it is now a densely crowded quarter, full of small industries, and tenement houses crammed with families, and much heart-rending squalor and poverty. Yet, passing down its main street, the eye constantly lights on fine old Jacobean and Georgian houses, red-tiled, dormer-windowed, with eaves and lofty attics; and once with ample gardens behind, now turned into yards, crammed with lumber, even as the stately houses have been subdivided into small shops, which represent all the needs of a densely populated, toiling neighbourhood.

Yet the Hoxton of to-day, fallen from its high estate, and weltering in mud and vegetable refuse, resonant with the bellowing of street vendors and the shrill chatter of innumerable work-girls, such as Mr Besant has limned in his 'Children of Gibbon' and others of his East End romances, is haunted by an array of shades, some, indeed, of high degree. Two centuries ago it was a charming rural village. It stood at the end of rustic Shoreditch and quiet Old Street, and ran northwards to the fields of Hoxton, which, beginning

by Kingsland Road, stretched right away to the village of Kingsland with its old houses and green. Those famous fields are now covered with streets, squares, 'roads,' and 'groves,' generally known as De Beauvoir Town, and thickly populated, and terminating at Ball's Pond Road, which runs at right angles to the main road north through Kingsland to Stamford Hill and Tottenham. But half a century ago a clear view of pasture and cornfields could be obtained, covering all the space between Kingsland Gate and Stamford Hill villadom.

We dwell thus on these Hoxton fields, and call them famous, for some of the most noted shades who haunt the once pretty village have traversed them. Across them—'to avoid the dust of the roads, and arrive at the Charter House'—came James I., what time he leisurely journeyed from the North to take possession of the throne of England. But a mightier and earlier crowned shade was before him. Henry VIII.—in veritable fact as well as phrase, 'most dread lord' to his subjects—visited, in all the pomp and splendour the Tudors loved, the fields of Hoxton and the village itself, the air resounding with fanfare of trumpet and deep-throated cheering, as the bluff despot watched the archers whom he so fostered contending at the butts; and from the quaint village houses a motley throng gathered to watch with awe their masterful sovereign, 'whose frown would have sent the proudest peer in England to the block.' The burlesque title of the 'Duke of Shoreditch' was bestowed by the king on the Captain, and that of Marquis of Hoxton on the best archer of our historic village; and, by the way, the manor of Hoxton—or Hokestone—has been held by the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's since a time earlier than the Norman Conquest. Thus 'the witty canon of St Paul's' may be said indirectly to be one of the shades which haunt the place.

Nor is James I. our only royal instance. His unhappy successor, when returning from his romantic love-journey to Spain, galloped with Buckingham, his ill-omened *fidus Achates*, across

the fields and down the village for the Bishop's Gate, passing through rural Shoreditch, where lately stood, amid the modern din and turmoil and showy shop architecture of the great thoroughfare of to-day, an Elizabethan-gabled timber house, which must have indeed witnessed many and marvellous vicissitudes in the centuries during which it remained unaltered amid constant metamorphoses. Hard by, in 'his house in Old Street—to which he retired,' curious as it sounds to those who know the incessant din and crowd of that now thickly populated centre of industry, as 'his favourite retreat from the gaiety and bustle of London'—dwelt the now almost forgotten author Samuel Daniel, who flourished in Elizabeth's reign, and wrote 'The Civil Wars between the Two Houses of Lancaster and York,' and whom Drummond of Hawthornden pronounced in rhyming 'second to none.' He cultivated his gardens, and frequently strolled in the evenings into flower-encircled Hoxton, wandering along its long winding street as he composed his poems or his History, for he wrote one of England from the Conquest to Edward III. His style both in prose and verse has, like Dryden's, a most modern aspect; and he wrote some of the poetry for the court entertainments; but ultimately retired 'to a life of contemplation and quiet in the country' near Hoxton.

The village, detached as it was at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and surrounded on all sides by fields—and a century later flowers were gathered in Brick Lane, Spitalfields—was a favourite place of resort for the citizens of credit and renown. Like 'merry Islington,' it was famous for its cakes and ale, also for custards, as appears from allusions in the dramatists and other popular writers of the period. Hither, therefore, came many pleasure-seekers, and among them one of the most inveterate; for, as a modern essayist has shrewdly remarked, nothing is more perceptible in that candid self-portraiture, the Diary of Samuel Pepys, than his many-sided capacity for enjoyment. Pepys passed his childhood at Kingsland, and mentions how, when he was a man of good position, he revisited his ancient haunts, the fields where he shot with his bow and arrows; and, indeed, he frequently took coach along Shoreditch, and so northward. Frequently, too, no doubt, he strolled out of the city gates towards Hoxton, and with that appreciation of good things which we see in every page of his Diary, enjoyed the cakes, ale, and custards, the flower-gardens, and famous elm-trees—the Whitmore family, whose name yet marks several well-known places in the locality, had some magnificent specimens, which were blown down early in George III.'s reign—and the pretty faces that peeped from the flower-enwreathed lattices of the Hoxton cottages. Some of the cottages are there still, but, alas, how different in aspect!

And besides the figure of the loquacious Clerk to the Admiralty of Charles I., one can see with the mental eye various brilliant and roystering figures familiar enough at that monarch's free-and-easy court, who found much diversion in occasionally going so far from the fashionable purlieus of Whitehall as to Hoxton in its rural quiet, there to riotously enjoy its cates and 'syllabubs from the red cows' pasturing in the belt of fields; and also to flirt more or less riotously with the pretty

maidens, who in those days were abundant among the ancient cottages—and who have left some representatives yet in the now long unlovely street, albeit, poor things! their faces are hunger-pinched and toilworn.

Perhaps, however, the shade which haunts Hoxton, of all others the most interesting to every student of English literature, though his name be unfamiliar to most of its present inhabitants, is one whose bodily presentment was often there some seventy or eighty years ago. 'A spare figure in clerly black,' with a melancholy smile, and keen, gentle humorous eyes, seems to flit before us as we pass down the lower end of the long street where still stands Hoxton House, ancient, indeed, in some of its buildings, and for so long a series of years a lunatic asylum. For thither, too, often across the Hoxton fields, now covered with houses, came Charles and Mary Lamb, both weeping as acquaintances have met them, and on their way, poor souls! to the asylum, whither they always went when Mary Lamb—to whom her gifted brother so nobly and unostentatiously devoted his life—felt one of her periodical fits of insanity approaching. Hither, from distant Shacklewell, where Lamb loved to lodge when desiring repose, and which with its ancient green is in great part unaltered as when he wrote some of his Essays, overlooking it the affectionate and sad pair, would journey—perhaps the most pathetic shades in Haunted Hoxton.

POMONA.*

By the Author of *Laddie, Tip Cat, Lil, &c.*

CHAPTER XIX.

For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings,
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

SHAKESPEARE.

'It is not a very good day with mother,' Pomona said, half an hour later, coming into the morning-room, where Sage had been luxuriously waiting in a deep armchair, in which each slight turn of the head brought some fresh beauty into view: the open window and through it the broad lawn, sloping away into thickets of rhododendrons, and beyond that, the park, and a glimpse of bright water through the great trees, and beyond it all, blue distance; or the conservatory, into which another window led, full of richest hues and sweetest fragrance; or the room itself, with pictures and statuary, books and music and flowers everywhere; or even the little table close at hand with its tempting array of scarlet strawberries, iced lemonade, and dainty cakes.

Pomona was looking wistful and sad, for even the separation of a few days was enough to show an alteration in her mother; or, perhaps, as she tried to persuade herself, she had forgotten a little of the weakness and transparent fragility which struck such a pang to her heart now.

'The weather has been trying lately,' Pomona went on with an almost pleading tone in her voice, insisting on finding any reason but the

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real and obvious one; 'and she went for rather too long a walk last week. And she has been so looking forward to to-day, and trying to be so well and bright, for my sake, that she has got nervous, and could not sleep just because she was so anxious to be at her best. Martin—that is her maid, you know, who was with her before I was born—says she is wonderfully nervous. Just fancy, Sage, Martin asked me not to talk about Mr Ludlow's picture and its likeness to me. She says that what I said in one of my letters about it seemed quite to worry mother. It is so unlike her, Sage—she used not to be a bit fanciful. She wants to see you presently after lunch; and I told her I was sure you would not mind being left a little to your own devices, as you would quite understand that I should want to be with her on my birthday; and she is so easily overtired if there is more than one in her room.'

Sage was able truthfully to declare that she would not mind if she were left all day to her own devices; and she entreated Pomona to do exactly as she would if she were alone.

'You don't know,' she said, 'how beautiful and new it all is to me. I was only thinking, before you came down, that I could be quite contented to sit here all day and never move.'

'But I shan't let you do that, you dear, little soul. Fancy coming to Beechfield and never moving out of the morning-room! Even if I should allow it, mother wouldn't. She would get right up off her sofa, I believe, and come down to see that you got proper treatment in your own mother's old home. It is yours as well as mine, Sage, so you must feel proud of it too. I will turn on Mrs Stone, the housekeeper, to show you the family pictures, unless you would rather prawl about by yourself. She is a dreadful old bore, there is no denying; she has all the names and dates and painters at the tip of her tongue, and reels them off to the people who come to see the house on the days when it is shown to the public. I used to think her wonderfully clever, when I was a child, to remember it all; but I soon found out that it was just learned off by rote, and that she could not answer any question the least off the beaten track; and that if she got at all put out, or lost the proper succession, she floundered hopelessly, and had to begin all over again. And for my part, I much prefer to invent the histories for myself, and I endowed all those old Lesters with such romantic stories, ever so much more real to me than Mrs Stone's dull, little, historical facts. The advantage I had over her was that I could ignore the unities of time, and bring young hearts together that centuries had divided; and there was no table of kindred and affinity in my world, for I think I frequently allowed a man to marry his pretty, young grandmother.—But I think you ought to be introduced properly to your relations, Sage; and it will gratify poor old Stone so much to do it, that you will have to sacrifice yourself. But come along into the garden, and I want you to see the stables and my dogs before lunch.'

Sage was well content, as she said, to be left

to amuse herself, and to explore the house and gardens and out into the shady glades of the park. She submitted gladly to Mrs Stone's guidance through the picture-gallery; the historical facts that had seemed so dry to Pomona were deeply interesting to Sage, who never till to-day had felt that she had any connection with the events of which she had laboriously mastered the particulars at school. It gave her a little thrill to reflect that an ancestor of hers had raised a troop for King Charles; that another had been attainted of high-treason and had his lands confiscated; that this in stiff ruff and long, pointed, jewelled stomacher had been one of Elizabeth's ladies; and the other—in whose somewhat sensual face Mrs Stone traced a likeness to Sage—had been a court beauty in Charles II.'s time. It seemed to give a reality to history, to fetch it out of the dog-eared covers of school-books, and set it moving and feeling and breathing before her. And it gave life to people who had been hitherto only names attached to pictures in the National Gallery, not meaning much more than the numbers. Van Dyck, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough were real painters like Mr Ludlow, to whom ancestors and ancestresses of hers had sat, just as she and Kiity had sat at Scar.

She looked with respect at the bed in which Queen Elizabeth slept. Did ever queen sleep in more four-posters than good Queen Bess? Future ages will not have a quarter the number to display as the resting-place of Queen Victoria, even if future ages have a quarter of the respectful interest that lingers, even in this radical age, in the uneasy resting-place of a head that wears a crown. She would have liked to have heard a great deal more about some of the relics: the handkerchief that belonged to Marie-Antoinette, the pearl-embroidered glove of Lady Jane Grey, the snuff-box given by Napoleon, &c.; only, she remembered Pomona's warning that vexatious questions annoyed the kind, old housekeeper, who appeared to her a very grand and dignified person, quite justified in the patronising tone she assumed.

She was called away from her examination of these treasures to her interview with Lady Lester. In after-days, looking back on this her only interview with her aunt, she always connected it in her mind with the deer in the park: perhaps it was the great, pathetic, dark eyes that looked so unnaturally large in the pale, wan face; perhaps it was the shadowy, fragile grace; perhaps it was the sense of speedy passing away which impressed her in this still, quiet room, as it had when the dappled herd flitted across the glade out of the shadow, across the sunshine, into the shadow again.

'Here is Sage, dearest,' Pomona said, rising from her low seat by her mother's sofa. 'Now I am going to spare you to her for ten minutes, which I think is very generous of me; and at the end of that time I shall come and turn her out ruthlessly.'

And then Pomona left them together.

'Let me look at you, my dear,' the faint voice said. 'Come and sit down where Mona was.—Yes; you are very like the Lesters, as she said.'

'Father always says I am like my mother.'

'I hardly remember her enough to say, but you are like the old portraits.'

'Pomona is not like them.'

'No.' Lady Lester's eyes closed; and Sage felt that her voice, with the greatest care to soften it, was still rough enough almost to scare the delicate life away; but Lady Lester began speaking again eagerly and hurriedly.

'I wanted very much to see you to ask you to forgive me.'

'What for?'

'For a great wrong.'

'I do not understand,' Sage said. She wished Pomona would come back; she had heard of people in great weakness getting wrong in their heads; and Lady Lester's eyes were bright and burning, and the thin hand that held Sage's grasped it with an almost painful pressure.

'No; how could you understand? Tell me, dear, have you been very poor?'

Sage's hand gave a little, proud start, as if to draw itself away from the detaining clasp.

'You must not be offended. I have so little time to put what I want to say into polite words. Mona will be back directly; and besides—do not tell her—I have not long to live, and may not see you again.'

'I have been very happy,' Sage said. 'I have the kindest, best father in the world, and a most happy home.'

'Yes; that is just what I want to know, that you are happy.'

There was something in the great burning eyes that seemed to draw out from Sage a hint of that greater happiness that had come to her of late, and she went on, with the colour mounting to her cheeks: 'I think sometimes I am the happiest girl in the world.'

'That is right. And you would not change places with any other?'

'Not for worlds.'

'Not with Mona?'

'Not with any one.'

'Am I right, little Sage, in thinking there is some other reason for the happiness? You can't be expected to tell a stranger all about it, though that stranger is an aunt; but I think you would if you knew what a weight it lifts off my conscience to think that what I have done has in no way affected your life's happiness.'

She drew the girl's flushing face towards her with her two soft hands and looked straight into the shy, gray eyes.

'Is he very nice, little Sage, very tender, very true, that for his sake you would not change with Mona or any girl in the world?—God bless you, dear! I shall sleep quieter with the feeling that I have not hurt you.—There is Mona coming—kiss me, and say you forgive me.'

'Indeed, indeed, there is nothing to forgive.'

'Why, mother, I declare you look ever so much brighter and better! I shall be quite jealous of this sly, little, quiet Sage if she can charm away your headache better than I can.'

But the transient life that the excitement of her conversation had imparted soon died away, and such prostration followed that Martin had to be summoned; and the two girls reluctantly left her, Martin promising to call Pomona directly her mother was sufficiently restored for her to return.

The two girls were lingering in the gallery that ran round the large central hall, when the

sound of a carriage at the front door made them draw back.

'Some one come to call,' Pomona said. 'I really can't see them. I think one has a right to do as one likes on one's birthday.'

Presently a silent-footed servant came up the stairs with some cards on a salver, and presented them to Pomona, who glanced at them carelessly.

'I said I thought you were engaged, Miss, as her ladyship was not very well,' the man said.

Pomona had taken up one of the cards and was looking at it hesitatingly. 'How did they know I was down?'

'They came to inquire for her ladyship, and asked when you were expected; so I said you were down for the day, Miss.'

Pomona looked round towards her mother's room.

'Martin promised to call me,' she said doubtfully, 'when mother was a little better. I should not like to miss a minute that I could be with her; but'—And then she looked at the card again uncertainly for a moment, ending, however, by tossing it back on to the salver, saying: 'Yes; say I am only down for a few hours, and I cannot leave Lady Lester.' And then she turned to a large window in the gallery that commanded a view of part of the drive up to the house, and stood there for a few minutes, after the closing of the door and the sound of wheels on the gravel announced that the callers had left.

Sage's artistic eye was struck by the exquisitely graceful picture she made, leaning on the oak window-ledge, with one hand holding back the heavy velvet curtain, and above her the rich colouring of old glass emblazoned with the Lester arms; and beyond, through the open casement, the broad sweep of park and the blue distance. Was it the sun through the crimson glass that cast a sudden flush on the milk-white neck as the sound of wheels died away?

'I wonder,' Sage thought to herself, 'if that caller was any one she cares for? It was a gentleman's card.'

And then a wave of sympathy swept over her, fancying how she would have felt if it had been Maurice driving away; and perhaps her eyes were a little too sympathetic when they met Pomona's, for she turned away with a half-proud, half-shy look, as if the blossom of her confidence was not sufficiently blown to allow of a gaze into its heart.

'I will go and see how mother is,' she said; and then, with a touch of compunction, she put her arm round Sage and kissed her. 'Poor, dear, little Sage. I am treating you very badly, leaving you so much to yourself.'

'Indeed, indeed, Pomona, I do not mind. I could not bear you to stop away from Lady Lester on my account.'

And then Sage went down the great stairs alone, still wondering if Pomona had any one like Maurice, and if that were he who drove away just now.

On the old carved oak table in the hall was the silver salver with the cards lying on it, one of them face downwards, as Pomona had tossed it; and Sage stood for a moment looking at it, figuring to herself what Pomona's lover should

be like, how handsome, noble, splendid; and then, hardly thinking what she was doing, or if the curiosity was justifiable, she turned the card over to see the name. It was 'Mr Maurice Moore.'

THE PROPOSED NAVAL INSURANCE FUND.

By CHARLES GLEIG.

THE loss of the battleship 'Victoria,' and the circumstances attending that terrible disaster, are still fresh in the public mind. It may be truly said that in every British home the deepest sympathy was felt for the widows and children of the brave fellows who met death so steadfastly on the 22d of June. The appeal of the Lord Mayor of London on behalf of the dependent relatives was so generously responded to in all parts of the kingdom, and even in the colonies, that within two months the Victoria Relief Fund was swelled to seventy-two thousand pounds, this being by far the greatest fund ever subscribed under similar circumstances. The Fund has since been entrusted to the management of the Royal Patriotic Commission, of which His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge is President; and as soon as the necessary inquiries and formalities have been concluded, the widows, orphans, and other dependent relatives will begin to receive small weekly pensions from the Fund thus generously subscribed by the public. As we write, more than three months have elapsed since the sinking of the 'Victoria,' but as yet the Patriotic Commissioners have not been able to issue those weekly pensions. This delay has led to very strong comments in the press and at the naval ports; but it would be outside the scope of the present paper to discuss that question, and we merely allude to the delay that has occurred in support of the contention that the time has arrived when a General Naval Insurance Fund ought surely to be formed.

This project has already been widely discussed at the naval ports, and there is every indication that the petty officers and men of the fleet are desirous of ensuring provision for their families in such a manner as to obviate the necessity of periodically appealing to the public for charity. Such an excellent scheme as this deserves the support of public men, members of Parliament, and even, perhaps, of the Government itself; for every one must admit that the system of relying upon public charity for the support of widows and orphans of men of the royal navy is altogether wrong in principle. It is not that the public grudge the money—this has been clearly exemplified by the loss of the 'Victoria'—but the seamen themselves are earnestly desirous of securing more definite provision for their families; and, for reasons we will endeavour to explain, the establishment of a General Insurance Fund would almost certainly render the naval service more attractive to the rank and file.

Under the present system, or rather lack of system, the widows and children of petty officers and men who lose their lives in the service of the Crown are only entitled to pensions under certain conditions. These pensions, as we shall show, are very small, and, but for the charity

of the public, would be altogether inadequate. Under the second section of the Act 46 and 47 Victoria, the Admiralty are empowered to grant these small weekly pensions to the widows and young children of men who have been killed or drowned on duty, or whose deaths have resulted, within twelve months, from injuries or disease directly due to the service. The regulation is so framed as to greatly restrict the award of these pensions, notwithstanding that the money comes out of the Greenwich Hospital Fund, and not out of the pockets of the taxpayers. It has to be proved to the satisfaction of the Admiralty that a man has met his death actually on duty, or else the widow gets nothing. Thus—to take a very common example—a seaman may be drowned by the capsizing of a waterman's boat, when returning to his ship from leave. In such a case the widow receives no pension. Or, again, a seaman may be robbed and murdered whilst ashore in some semi-civilised country, and here again the widow would be thrown upon the world. This regulation may or may not be regarded as harsh; but in any case the remedy for this state of affairs will never be found in Admiralty circulars, for what is required is obviously a General Insurance Fund upon which all naval men's widows should have a legal and indisputable claim.

But to return for a moment to the existing rules. These Greenwich pensions, granted under fixed regulations, vary in amount from three shillings and sixpence to six shillings and sixpence a week; the widows of seamen, stokers, or marines being entitled to the lowest scale, whilst the widows of petty officers may receive the higher rates. Small allowances are also made to each child, never exceeding two shillings a week; but these cease in the case of boys at fourteen and of girls at sixteen years of age. From these figures it will be observed that the widow of an able seaman left with, say, three young children on her hands would receive a pension of not more than nine shillings and sixpence a week. It has always been necessary on this account to appeal to the charitable instincts of the British public whenever any of Her Majesty's ships have been lost, or even when serious accidents have occurred afloat, such as the bursting of the turret gun on board Her Majesty's ship 'Thunderer.' By this means poor Jack's dependent relatives have been preserved from absolute want; but the system is discreditable to a great maritime nation, and humiliating to the feelings of our seamen.

But there is another point which cannot be passed over in silence, and which in itself affords a strong argument in favour of the proposed scheme of naval insurance. The public is accustomed to subscribe towards the relief of the widows and children in all cases of actual disaster on a large scale, such as the loss of a ship, serious gun accidents, and so forth; but the public is not expected, nor can it be asked, to relieve individual cases of distress, such as those to which we have already alluded. Take the case of a seaman who is killed by falling from aloft, for example. His widow receives the Greenwich pension of three shillings and sixpence a week, and the officers and men of the ship invariably raise a subscription for her benefit;

but here the matter ends, although, of course, the unfortunate woman thus thrown upon the world deserves to be helped just as much as if her husband's life had been sacrificed under more sensational circumstances. Perhaps we have now sufficiently explained the desirability of establishing a system of naval insurance, and may proceed to consider some of the schemes under discussion in the naval ports.

The proposed formation of a General Naval Disaster Fund is not altogether a new project. The Naval Exhibition of 1891 was organised by a Committee of officers with the object of benefiting naval charities; and, thanks to the support of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the undertaking proved very successful. After paying all expenses, the Committee of the Naval Exhibition were able to declare a surplus of £47,246, 6s. 9d., and with this money it was decided to establish a new charity, known as the Royal Naval Fund. The Queen was graciously pleased to become patron of this Society, or Committee of management; the Prince of Wales was appointed President; and it was hoped that the problem of how to make adequate provision for the widows and dependent relatives of men who lost their lives in the navy would at length have been satisfactorily solved. Unfortunately, and in spite of royal patronage and support, this scheme has hitherto failed. It is scarcely necessary to explain that the interest of the capital produced by the Exhibition was in itself far too small to enable the Committee to carry out their scheme. It was confidently anticipated, however—by officers out of touch with the views of the lower deck—that there would be no difficulty in inducing the petty officers and men of the navy to support the scheme. The men were asked to assist in the project by paying one shilling a head per annum; and not a little astonishment was evinced in official circles when, after mature consideration, the men unanimously declined to have anything to do with the scheme. In making this decision, the men of the lower deck were well advised, as we will endeavour to show. The Committee of the Exhibition Fund had vested the administration of the surplus in trustees, who were bound down to apply it in relieving the widows and dependent relatives of men who actually lost their lives in the service, and the men's voluntary contributions would have been expended similarly. The scheme was a good one in many respects; but the men held, and, as we think, rightly, that the principle of excluding the naval pensioners' widows was open to grave objections. If they had accepted the scheme, there can be little doubt we might have had to wait many years for a really extensive and business-like scheme of naval insurance; whereas, now, there is every prospect of this important question being shortly settled on a much wider basis. In order to make this point clearer to civilians, we should remind our readers that although the widow of a commissioned officer is entitled to a small pension under any circumstances—unless, indeed, she is possessed of considerable private means—the widow of a naval pensioner is considered to have no claim whatever upon the State, and has very frequently to end her days in the workhouse. The men therefore determined to have nothing to do with a scheme framed solely

in the interests of those actually serving afloat. They favoured a much wider scheme.

Now, the loss of the 'Victoria' following so closely upon the wreck of the 'Serpent' has had a very marked effect upon the minds of naval men. The idea of establishing an Insurance scheme was no doubt revived by the Committee of the Exhibition Fund; but the failure of that project damped the ardour of the officers, and for a time it seemed as though the men were inclined to let the whole question drop. But the 'Victoria' disaster has naturally aroused the men; and though the public has subscribed most generously towards the relief of the widows, the loss of so many lives has again directed their attention to the necessity of establishing an extensive scheme of Insurance. There is no longer room for doubt that the men of the lower deck are anxious to help themselves in this matter, and that they are willing to devote a small proportion of their earnings to insuring their lives; but at the same time they are not disposed to give more than a few shillings a year individually, and consequently the scheme cannot be carried out except with official aid. Miss Agnes Weston, 'The Sailor's Friend,' whose name is familiar to most people, has suggested in letters to the press that the Government should advance, without charging interest, a sum of three hundred thousand pounds. The suggestion is startling, but not unreasonable, for Miss Weston points out that there would be no great difficulty in repaying the money after an interval of about forty years. It is a large sum of money to advance, yet it is after all little more than the price of a cruiser, and, moreover, it could be ultimately repaid to the State if properly managed. If any such project should meet with the approval and support of the authorities, the men will be willing to subscribe a shilling a head per month; and it is estimated that those united subscriptions would amount to about forty thousand pounds per annum. Then, again, if the naval pensioners are included in the scheme, and allowed to share in the benefits, the annual subscription would, of course, be very largely augmented.

Another very practical scheme has been suggested by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Thomas Symonds, a distinguished officer, who periodically endeavours to persuade the Government of the day to increase the strength of the navy, and whose name should also be familiar to the public. Sir T. Symonds has pointed out that the Admiralty have long been making a clear profit of more than twenty-five thousand pounds per annum on the victualling of the fleet, and the gallant officer holds that this surplus should be utilised for the benefit of the men. It is so perfectly certain that this saving will be effected, that the victualling vote is correspondingly reduced before being submitted to Parliament. Many will no doubt agree that the country could well afford to dispense with this economy; and if the Government should be willing to pay this annual surplus into a Naval Insurance Fund, the necessary balance could readily be made up by the men's subscriptions.

Still another project has been widely discussed at the home ports, which is greatly favoured by the seamen. The Commissioners of the Patriotic

Fund still have control of the numerous funds subscribed by the public for the relief of widows of seamen. None of the funds have been materially reduced, because the Commissioners have wisely expended only the interest, so that in course of time, as death gradually settles all claims, the Commissioners will find themselves possessed of a large surplus. This money will, of course, have to be utilised for the benefit of the navy, and it is suggested that the time has arrived when the various surpluses might be amalgamated, and devoted to forming the nucleus of the proposed Insurance Fund. No doubt, if the money can be spared for this purpose, the Commissioners should consider the project; but the amount of money at their disposal would not of itself go very far. Of the 'Captain' Relief Fund, £31,534 remains; of the 'Eurydice' Fund, £14,472; and of the 'Atalanta' Fund, £7500. Lieutenant-colonel Young, Secretary to the Patriotic Commission, has recently stated, however, that it is proposed to devote any surplus of the 'Victoria' Fund to forming the nucleus of a General Disaster Fund, and it is not improbable that the trustees of the Naval Exhibition Fund may be induced to lend their support to this project.

It must be remembered, however, that those Naval Funds are carefully safeguarded by deeds of trust, and that there may be difficulties in the way of the trustees which would prevent the proposed amalgamation of surpluses for several years to come. Meanwhile, there is the danger of present inaction to be considered. At the present moment the men of the fleet are keenly alive to the desirability of forming a Naval Insurance Fund, and there would be no difficulty in persuading them to submit to a small compulsory levy on their pay. If the Admiralty will bestir themselves in this matter, the result is not doubtful; otherwise, it is much to be feared that the Naval Insurance scheme may remain in dreamland for years to come.

LESS THAN KIN.

A STORY IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

By Mrs WILL C. HAWESLEY.

CHAPTER I.

It was a pretty cottage, that at which the dingy cab, engaged at Havant Station, drew up one wet June evening. Pretty, notwithstanding the weather which caused the roses, climbing up the front and peeping in at the windows, to nod their moist, bedraggled heads, and which weighted with damp the vine-leaves overshadowing the porch. Yet, in spite of its rural beauty, that it would be an empty dwelling in a very few hours was evident, for the curtainless casements looked bare and wretched, bits of straw displayed their ungainly length against the dark mould of the flower-beds and upon the yellow gravel of the sodden path; whilst over everything was written, as plainly to be read as the two short words upon the board by the gate, 'To Let.'

'I'm glad we had the covered vans, though they are so much more expensive,' remarked Mildred Russell to her husband as she flattened

her nose—a well-shaped nose enough under more favourable circumstances—against the panes and stared out into the twilight. 'Every atom of furniture would have been ruined otherwise.'

'My dearest Milly, all your arrangements are wise!' declared the clergyman behind her. 'Fancy arriving at Denleigh with never a dry chair to offer the expectant parishioner. Avant the notion!'

'You're a goose. You'll have to improve, now that you're a Vicar, really, Charlie. Oh, you must! And treat me with the dignity becoming my position too. Just promise to try, will you?'

'Promise? I'll promise anything!' At which his wife laughed, understanding that reply of old. 'There's a knock at the street door now, and a fine opportunity to begin my career of respect.—No; you don't,' as she showed signs of herself answering the summons. 'In the absence of the domestic, such menial offices naturally devolve upon the obedient husband. Permit me, madam!' With another peal of the merriest laughter, Mrs Russell sank upon the chair he was offering.

'How nice! And what a change,' she remarked, looking saucily up into his face. 'But really, if you *are* going to act butler!'

He was already in the hall, threading a careful path between the packages that encumbered the house entrance. In another instant his wife heard the sound of the turning handle, and of his voice offering an astonished greeting. 'My dear Jack! What on earth brings you here? And to-night. Come in out of the wet—do! Give me your goods.'

Mildred was beside him by this time. Having caught the first three syllables, she had waited in state no longer. 'Oh, Mr Dainty, how delightful of you! We were just wanting somebody to cheer us up—weren't we, Charlie?' with her pretty smile. 'Take care, you clumsy creature. You'll drop— Why, it's a baby!' For a little startled cry suddenly proceeded from the rolled-up bundle, which Charlie, believing it to contain nothing but shawls and rugs, had unceremoniously tucked under his arm, and now, in his astonishment, must inevitably have dropped, had not Milly's hands closed upon it.

Without a thought of anything but the child, who was beginning to scream loudly, the lady turned abruptly and led the way into the sitting-room. At least there was a chair there, if only the oldest of kitchen properties, upon which she could deposit herself and investigate her burden. Which she immediately proceeded to do, ultimately bringing to light a tiny creature, with the reddest of red faces, and the smallest of clenched fists, with which latter it beat wildly at the air, violently yelling the whole time. Mildred caught it closely to her breast and looked up, with a world of inquiry in her gaze, at her guest, who by this time had entered, followed by the wondering cleric.

'That's the way she's been going on all day,' Jack Dainty exclaimed, despairingly. '—Oh, Mrs Russell, I can't bear it—I can't bear it! Quiet her, if you can—do. My poor wee girl.' And he stooped to kiss the smooth head, that was jogging itself up and down furiously upon Mildred's shoulder. When he raised himself, she

saw that great drops, not attributable to the rain, were in his eyes.

'The child's hungry, I believe. When was she fed last?' going straight, as was her wont, to the practical side of the matter.

'This morning. Before we started from London, I suppose. At least—I— Oh, how shall I make you understand?' With which final exclamation he suddenly sank upon his knees by the rickety table, and bowing his head upon the hard wood, burst into sobs. Mildred and her husband exchanged glances.

'Here, Charlie, take her for a moment; I'll get what she wants,' cried Milly, though a great lump had risen in her throat, and she felt more inclined to join her tears with Jack's than to do anything more useful. That, however did not hinder her quick movements, which in five minutes resulted in producing a baby's feeding-bottle, filled with warm milk and water, upon which the half-famished infant at once set to work, giving vent the while to little gurgles of satisfaction.

'Wasn't it lucky I had kept our Dick's bottle to give to Mrs Jones for Mary?' Mildred remarked, as she held one soft hand in her own, and watched the stormy face subside into peaceful sleepiness.—'But, Charlie, I expect Mr Daintry is hungry too. Do go and fetch the cold meat. It's on the top shelf of the cupboard, and so is the solitary loaf we possess. As to knives and forks, you must rummage for them. Such are the exigencies of a move,' turning to the visitor, who had by this time dried his eyes, with a sort of tired pathetic movement that touched the spectators more than any words. 'He's in awful trouble, whatever it may be,' was the thought in Mrs Russell's mind.

The supper arrived by-and-by; and although at the first sight of food Jack shrank back with a half-shudder, the refreshment did him good when he began to eat. Gradually the nervous quivering about his delicately cut mouth ceased, and the miserable heaving of his chest grew less noticeable. When at length he pushed away his plate and turned to the fire, he certainly seemed revived.

'You're worn out, old fellow,' exclaimed Charlie, with ready sympathy.

'Nearly'—pressing his fingers to his forehead. 'But how good you've been,' stretching out the other hand—a very weak, womanish hand it looked—and laying it upon Charlie's far more healthy member. 'You always were better than anybody else.'

'Oh, always!'—with a laugh, that for once was not the reflex of his feelings. 'And now, who is this young person?'—pointing to the child upon his wife's knee.

'My own daughter'—with an air half sorrowful, half proud. 'Ah, Charlie, you didn't know I was married?'

'No, indeed. How should I? when you haven't written for—'

'Two years,' finished Mildred, as he paused. 'I remember, if you don't! You see, I consider my husband's friends are my friends too, Mr Daintry.'

'I know,' answering her smile with another, sadder than tears. 'But let me tell you my story.

It won't be a long one, for I'm too fagged myself to want to weary you.'

'No fear of that,' from Charlie. But the other did not heed the interruption.

'I married—her a year ago. She was my landlady's daughter,' he began, in short, jerky sentences. 'Whilst I was studying in London I had rooms in her mother's house, and so made her acquaintance. Afterwards, Mrs Dawson died, and she was left quite alone. So my twenty-first birthday was also our wedding-day. She was the sweetest, daintiest creature. And she died just a fortnight ago, when this little one was born.—Mrs Russell, she was starved to death!' He drew a deep breath, as of a creature in physical agony. Then, as no one spoke—for what was there to say in reply to such an awful statement as that?—he went on again.

'We were married without my father's knowledge. But it came to his ears, and he stopped my allowance then and there. That was within a month of the wedding. I went and pleaded with him. He listened and laughed; and I flung out of the house in anger. But worse times came. We pawned—her—wedding ring to get enough money for our railway fares, and went again—together! But he would not so much as see us. We never redeemed that ring.'

Once more he stopped. Mildred's tears were falling fast upon the white dress of the motherless baby, and Charlie was shading his eyes with his hand. But now, whilst he recurred in memory to the deepest depths of his misery, Jack's own eyes, which overflowed so freely half an hour ago, were dry.

'When she was dying, I went again to Rushton, spending my last penny. I had better have saved it to buy food for—her; with the pause he invariably made before each reference to his dead wife. 'I did see Sir George then. I told him that she was perishing from actual want. And he answered that it was what he wished. To get rid of her was the best he could do for me. After that, can I give him my little Ena?'

There was no determination in his tone, only the sad depression that had characterised his manner ever since he entered, and that told of the crushing torture of mind and body through which he must have passed. Charles Russell, remembering him as he used to be, weak but high-spirited, passionate but affectionate, could scarcely believe this to be his father's old pupil and favourite, who at one time had been to himself more than most younger brothers are. But it was not he who first replied to the pathetic appeal.

'Give him this baby? Ena, too! What a pretty name!'

'It was her mother's. Her people had been yeomen-farmers, and could trace their pedigree back to Saxon times. Longer than I can follow my own,' from Jack, with a melancholy smile.

'Really? But of course Sir George cannot have her. Why,' very hotly, 'he might teach her to despise her own mother, which would be dreadful! You'll keep her yourself, Mr Daintry. I can tell you a lot about babies, because there's our small Dick, you remember. Oh, she'll be such a companion'—

But he interrupted her. 'I can't bear my life here,' he said. 'I've no resources either, because

I'd rather die, and so follow—her, than go, on my own behalf, to my father, after'—

Mildred nodded a full comprehension of the unuttered words.

'He has my eldest brother and his boys to console him. Duke will never transgress in the way I did'—with a slight curl of his lips. 'As to work, there's none to be had in England; or if there is, I can't find it. But an old friend, whom I knocked against yesterday— You remember Dolby, Russell?'

'Oh yes.'

'Well, he offered me a ticket for the States. He's been in low-water too, and had actually booked his passage out, when he came in for a legacy. And as he had some notion, I suppose, that I was hard up, he gave me the chance of this windfall. The ship starts to-morrow.'

There was a silence when he paused. Of course the husband and wife guessed, more or less, of the request which was to be made, and were already meditating upon the matter. They were not rich by any means, in spite of the living to which the clergyman had just been appointed, the revenues of which were, indeed, barely two hundred a year. And they had themselves a five-year old toddler for whom to provide. Yet all Mildred's womanly heart had gone out to the infant whose little fingers were in her own warm grasp, and whose deep breathing, still broken by an occasional sob, alone disturbed the stillness; whilst Mr Russell was endeavouring to find an excuse for his own desire to have another pratler about the house in the consideration of the benefit that Dick might derive from such society. By the time that Jack found courage to give voice to his wishes, there was small danger that he would be met with a refusal.

'Mrs Russell, will you take her and bring her up as your own? Don't let any one know that she has no mother. In you she'll find one, poor little soul. And if she never hears the truth, she cannot feel desolate.'

Mildred had believed herself prepared for anything; but she opened her eyes at that. 'But you'll be coming back and wanting her by-and-by,' she urged.

'Then I am sure that you won't dispute my claim,' with another of those dreadfully mirthless smiles. 'But I don't believe that I shall ever ask you to give her up. It is possible. But I have a presentiment'—

'Bosh!' from Charles. 'You always were as superstitious as you were high, and that's saying a good deal.'

'Well, presentiments sometimes come true, at any rate. And if mine should, will you keep the child?'

The eyes of husband and wife met, making inquiry each of the other, as usual. True, that these two had been married for six long years of sunshine and shadow, but they were still lovers as fond—nay, much fonder—than when they plighted their troth. And they had not lost the lover's faculty of thought-reading.

'There must positively be one condition, then: her grandfather must be acquainted with the child's whereabouts. You can draw up a will, leaving her guardianship to me, in case of your own death. But, in fairness to everybody, Sir George Daintry must be told.'

And so it was settled. Using such legal knowledge as his never arduous studies had acquired for him, John Daintry bequeathed his one treasure to his friend, and wrote a brief note to his father before he quitted the house. Then, silently grasping Mildred's hand, and kissing the brow of the slumbering Ena, he took his voiceless farewell—for ever, in this world; for the ship that sailed with him on board arrived at New York with one short in the complement of her passengers. During a gale, encountered in the Atlantic, a furious gust of wind had torn a heavy rope from its fastenings and swept it across the deck, from which every landsman but one had long since disappeared. Like a serpent the long line coiled itself round the solitary idler, carrying him along in its flight; and before help could reach him, it was too late. The great billows had closed above Jack Daintry's head, hiding him and his broken heart in their gray depths until the day of resurrection shall call him forth.

And little Ena was an orphan.

A COREAN ROYAL RECEPTION.

CHOSŌN, the Land of the Morning Calm, has been for ages a closed book to European travellers and merchants, till within the last ten years, during which the hatred of the people to all foreigners has to some extent been overcome, and the country been opened up to Western civilisation. Treaty ports have been established, and the upper classes, at least, are fast learning foreign ways. The king himself is an enlightened man, and does all he can to introduce foreign customs and appliances into the country. Unlike his Chinese suzerain, he is only too glad to see the foreign representatives, and often invites them to Court festivities. A short account of one of these, held in honour of the queen's birthday, may not be uninteresting to English readers.

It was a cold afternoon in December that we started off in our official sedan-chairs, carried by eight bearers, for the palace. My chief was resplendent in silver-laced uniform and cocked-hat; for myself, not yet being the proud possessor of a uniform, I wore evening dress—rather an airy costume under the circumstances! After about half an hour's ride, we reached the outer gates of the palace, where a throng of people, in white robes and black high-crowned hats, lounged about, gazing at the foreign visitors. On all sides were official chairs, supported on long poles or covered with leopards' skins, the Corean emblem of rank. Preceded by our 'keso,' or flag-bearer, we passed through the gates, and walked through several large courtyards filled with soldiers, servants, and musicians, the last being dressed in scarlet. At some of the gates the sentries presented arms in a casual sort of way; at others, they took no notice of us at all; the discipline of the Corean army being decidedly lax, so much so that the guard at one of the inner gates was fast asleep, weighed down probably by the ponderous suit of chain-armour

which he wore. At last we reached the ante-chamber, where we were to wait till the king was ready to receive us, the representatives of each nation going into the audience chamber separately. Here were gathered some of the highest officials and nobles of the country—Presidents of Boards, Generals, and such-like 'great men'—dressed in dark green robes, high hats, and belts of wood inlaid with rhinoceros' horn—the Chinese dress of the Ming dynasty. They bowed, smiled, and shook hands most affably, setting chairs for us in an inner room, where a concourse of brilliant uniforms denoted the presence of the foreign representatives. The Japanese were especially noticeable for a superabundance of gold lace and cocked-hats out of all proportion to the size of the wearer.

After a while, a Court interpreter came bustling in to say that our turn had come and the king would see us; so, doffing our overcoats, we followed him out into the open air, across a courtyard and up some steps into a pavilion, the floor of which was covered with matting. On this our guide prostrated himself, and we bowed, although I as yet saw nothing to bow at. Crossing the pavilion, we went up into a dimly lighted hall, where I could just make out a personage—evidently the king—dressed in red robes, sitting cross-legged before a table, surrounded by a few courtiers. We advanced, and went through the necessary bowings and scrapings, standing quite close up to the table, which was covered by a foreign cloth of brilliant pattern. Our interpreter, bending forward, translated the king's words to us in a subdued tone of voice. His Majesty asked after our Queen's health, where she had been staying lately, and other questions of a like nature. Suitable answers were returned; and after I had been presented and inspected by the king, the interview ended, and we backed out of the hall as gracefully as possible on a floor covered with uneven matting. The king struck me as an intelligent-looking man, with pale face and a pleasant expression, especially when he smiled.

We were now conducted to a smaller pavilion, where the Crown Prince stood to receive us. Mentors stood on each side to prompt him, and he seemed to be a very nervous youth. He was dressed in a brown robe, and bore no resemblance to the king, his father. After a few minutes, we withdrew and went back to the anteroom, there to wait till all the audiences were over.

In about half an hour's time we put on our hats and coats and marched off in a body to an inner building in the palace, past the Examination grounds and a foreign-built clock-tower. Dinner was laid in a long room, outside which a tent of matting, raised about eight feet from the ground, had been erected. The wooden floor was covered with matting, and here the dancing was to take place after dinner. We had to wait some time till all the preparations for dinner were completed, pacing up and down to keep ourselves warm, for it was bitterly cold outside, and the wind blew through the matting most persistently. The arrangements did not seem quite complete; officials were in consultation; the *menu*—on a large roll of paper—was being drawn up by the head-cook, a stout, comfortable-

looking person, dressed in green: servants were rushing about in all directions, placing knives and forks on the table, only to take them up next moment and run away with them. The electric light, too, was refractory, and evinced a desire to flare up suddenly and then go out, leaving the assembly in total darkness. It needed the combined efforts of two or three Presidents of Boards and the head-cook to set it going satisfactorily.

Then a difficulty arose as to how we were to be seated, some of the foreign representatives being very particular on this point. At last all was settled, and we took our seats, Koreans and foreigners alternately, the President of the Foreign Office at one end of the table, and the President of the Home Office at the other. The dinner was served in foreign style, and was good, although the quantity rather exceeded the quality of the dishes. There was a succession of pigeon, duck, chicken, pheasant, bustard, not to mention roast beef, mutton, and other joints. Puddings we had of many kinds, and fruit in abundance. The dinner must have lasted an hour and a half, when the President rose and proposed the health of the Sovereigns of Foreign Powers, which was duly responded to by the toast of the health of the king of Corea.

Cigars were then handed round, and we adjourned to the afore-mentioned tent, where a bevy of dancing girls, who had previously been flattening their noses against the windows of the dining-room, awaited us, arrayed in all the colours of the rainbow. They wore baggy silk trousers gathered in at the ankles; and gowns of red, blue, and yellow, reaching to below the knee, with long sleeves, which they waved about when dancing. Their waists were placed immediately below the armpits, and there was no attempt at tight lacing. All had glossy black hair, drawn back from the forehead, with huge head-dresses of artificial hair and flowers—not unbecoming. They numbered about eighty in all, of ages ranging, apparently, from ten to thirty. At a given signal, the musicians, who were seated cross-legged on the floor at the other end of the hall, struck up a weird, barbaric chant; and a band of girls with arms outstretched advanced at a slow, measured pace, swaying the body to the time of the music and placing their little slippered feet with a swing on the ground, while they chanted a monotonous dirge, every now and then changing suddenly to a higher key. The effect was curious, and rather pleasing. The dance consisted in moving backwards and forwards, in and out, now almost touching the ground with a graceful sweep of their long sleeves, now pirouetting on their heels. Just as this rhythmic movement was beginning to grow monotonous, the castanets rattled, and the music and dancing ceased abruptly.

It would fill a book to give a description of all the different dances they went through that evening. An account of some of the more striking figures will give an idea of the whole performance. For instance, a wooden frame about eight feet high, upright on a stand, was wheeled in by the attendants. It was painted in gaudy colours, and had a round hole at the top, through which a silken ball had to be thrown. Two girls advanced from opposite sides and

began swaying about to the sound of music, every now and then making a swoop down on the ball, which lay in front of them. At length, each girl picked up her ball, and, while swaying from side to side, made feints at throwing it through the hole. Suddenly one girl made a lucky shot and pitched hers through; whereupon she knelt down, whilst an attendant damsel placed a flower in her hair in token of victory. The other, meanwhile, had also thrown, but unsuccessfully, so she received a daub of black on her cheek, and then retired crestfallen into the ranks, while her more fortunate sister received a piece of silk as a reward. Another pair now took their places before the frame, and the same performance was gone through again, till all had had their turn. The dancers then formed into two columns, the successful ones carrying their pieces of silk on one side, the unsuccessful on the other. They marched round once or twice, and then dispersed as the music stopped.

Another interesting figure was the sword-dance, performed by four girls, dressed in crimson and yellow silk, with feathered head-dresses, to represent soldiers. Eight swords were laid on the ground in a circle. The girls began, as usual, to sway about; then as the music quickened, they picked up their swords, one in each hand, and began waving them round their heads. The band played faster and faster; and the dancers twirled their swords in the most wonderful manner, never seeming to tire, although the strain on the wrists must have been tremendous. Now they began to jump about, making pretence to rush at each other, and then as quickly retreating, throwing themselves into the most extraordinary attitudes. This lasted for quite a quarter of an hour, and was the most lively performance of the evening, eliciting great applause from the onlookers. Suddenly they stopped, and, starting a low monotonous chant, marched round several times and then retired to their places. After this, men dressed up to represent gigantic storks and tigers came dancing in, imitating the movements of the creatures very cleverly. They varied their entertainment by making dashes at the girls, who tried to escape their clutches by running about in all directions, screaming and laughing. The performance closed with a grand march round of the whole corps of dancers, a high-coloured junk in the middle, in which a little girl was seated, turning slowly round on its axis, as the other girls marched round, singing as before. The whole effect was very pleasing, and formed a sight not easily to be forgotten.

By this time the clock was striking eleven, and we hurried off to our chairs, after having said good-bye to the President and other officials. A slight stoppage occurred at one of the inner gates, owing to its being locked and the key having been carried off into safe-keeping for the night. The king's permission was needed to open it, as well as to obtain the key, which was at last brought, and proved to be quite a giant of its kind, being at least a foot long, made of solid iron. It took several men to turn it in the lock and push open the great gates, through which we passed escorted by a guard of soldiers, who volunteered their services to conduct us home, in the hope of receiving some present next day. At last the

outer gates were reached, where our chairs awaited us. We hurried through the deserted streets; and so, as Mr Pepys would have said had he been there, 'home to bed, well pleased.'

THE BRONZE MEDALLION.

THE people who drop into my studio and examine the various objects of art and virtue which a long life and a considerable success in my profession have enabled me to collect together, would no doubt be very much surprised to hear that of all my treasures there is none so dear to me as the Bronze Medallion that lies enshrined within a crystal case on my mantel-piece. Many of my visitors have glanced at it, and turned away to examine a rare bit of carving, or an almost priceless example of some forgotten art. To them the bronze medallion suggested nothing; possibly they thought—if they gave the matter any thought at all—that it was some medal won in my student days, and therefore treasured with care. That it represented a whole life-history, and had the power to revive many strange memories, they had no idea. Some people, perhaps, seeing it in a place of honour amongst my knick-knacks, may have fancied that it was something for which I had the same superstitious reverence that other men give to a horse-shoe. The bronze medallion, however, is neither a fetich nor a memento of an early artistic success; it is simply an insignificant object, worth perhaps a few shillings, which has played no small part in my life, and on one occasion saved me from a sudden and violent death.

Thirty years ago, when I was a young man of twenty-six, and had fame and fortune still eluding me, I was attached to the artistic staff of the *Illustrated Weekly*, a journal which was just then beginning a career of great success. Black and white work was not then what it is now; but people thought highly of the illustrations we were able to give them for sixpence, and there was no lack of encouragement for proprietors or artists. My own special forte was animal life, as it always has been. From the time when I could first hold a pencil, I had spent my happiest moments in drawing horses. To me a horse was a creature of infinite artistic possibilities. I had drawn him sitting in the ring of a circus and galloping at express speed over a racecourse, and it mattered little to me whether he was a high-bred or a shaggy Shetland pony. I had already begun to paint him in oils, and my first picture, 'Young Horses at Play,' was considered worthy of a place in the Academy. It was this success in depicting horses that led the editor of the *Illustrated Weekly* to suggest that I should go down to Doncaster and make a sketch of the St Leger of that year. There was some famous horse running—I forget his name for the moment—and the public interest in the race was greater than usual. Consequently, the proprietors determined to give a double-page illustration of the scene; and I travelled to Doncaster a day or two before the event, and began my work by getting an accurate idea of the racecourse, and selecting a favourable standpoint from which to focus my sketch.

The day of the great race came, and during the morning I was busily occupied in interviewing the various horses engaged, and in filling my sketch-book with bits that seemed likely to be useful. When the afternoon came round and the racing began, I made my way to a certain part of the course which had seemed to me very well suited to my purposes, and there I took up my stand. There were two races to be run before the St Leger; and while these were being got through, and during the intervals between them, I occupied myself in watching the doings of the crowd which filled the upper part of the town moor. There must have been two hundred thousand people present on the stands and in the rings and on the moor, and from them came a perfect babel of sound, above which the stentorian voices of the bookmakers blended with the shrill cries of catchpenny adventurers of all sorts. Here two or three members of the three-card-trick fraternity were endeavouring to gull a group of round-faced rustics; there, a similar gang were shouting the praises of a sort of roulette table; yonder, a betting-man had screamed himself hoarse, and was reduced to shaking the money in his bag as a means of attracting attention. Beyond the shouting, swaying, bustling crowd stretched a long line of vehicles of all descriptions, from the lordly-looking coach to the farmer's light cart, and on these men and women were eating and drinking and discussing the prospects of the favourite for the great race. Across the course rose the long line of stands, thickly packed with fashionable race-goers, and these made a dark background to the picture I had in my mind's eye.

I was noticing all these things, and taking a sly sketch now and then of some face or figure that attracted my attention, when I caught sight of a little gentleman, evidently a Frenchman, who seemed very much out of place amongst the rough crowd. He was very neatly dressed from top to toe; but as he passed me I noticed that his black frock coat was somewhat shiny at the shoulders, and that his carefully brushed hat had certainly seen better days. He went in and out amongst the crowd, staring at the bookmakers, and glancing curiously at the three-card fraternity. I thought there was something wistful about his eyes as he looked at the gold which these gentry displayed so lavishly. Presently I lost sight of him in the crowd; but about ten minutes before the St Leger was to be run, I saw him again. He was engaged in confidential conversation with an individual whom I set down at once as a betting-man's tout, and against whose wiles and blandishments I should have liked to warn the evidently innocent foreigner. Presently, however, there was a great cry of 'They're off!' and I had to turn my attention to the race.

However great the excitement, and however long it may have existed prior to the event which rouses it, it takes but a few very brief moments to allay it for ever. Within four minutes of the cry of 'They're off!' the horses had flashed past me and past the winning-post, and the great race was over. I strolled round the crowd and amused myself by watching the faces of the people who had lost their money, and the joyful

manifestations of those who had betted successfully. I passed beyond the line of carriages and carts, and walked across the moor to the slight hill at the bottom of the course, from whence there is an excellent view of the crowds gathered before the stands. There were very few people about the hill or the furze-bushes which cover it, and things were quiet there after the roar and bustle of the crowd. I turned away to the left, intending to go into the high-road and walk back to the town; but I suddenly paused and hesitated, for there, close before me, was the little French gentleman, evidently in distress. He sat on the ground behind one of the furze-bushes with his hands hanging helplessly over his drawn-up knees, and his head drooping forward in abject fashion. It was evident that he had fallen amongst thieves. I went up to him and spoke, feeling that his distress warranted me in doing so.

'I am afraid you are in trouble, sir,' I said.

He lifted his face from his hands and looked up. 'Ah, m'sieur!' He spread his little fat hands abroad with a gesture that was half pathetic, half comical. 'Hélas, I have been rob—swindled—I have lost all my moneys.'

'Do you mean that some one has picked your pocket?' I asked. 'If so, you should inform the police.'

'Ah, but it is not zat zey have peek my pockect!' he answered quickly. 'It is zat I am one big fool—I bet—I stake—I gives my money to ze maker of books, and—pho! it is gone.'

'Ah, you have been betting.'

'Hélas, m'sieur, yes. You see, I am—ah, but!—I am poor. I am Professor of Languages at seexty pounds a year. It is ver' leetle for Madame my spouse, and for Jules and myself, and I often zink of how I can make heem more. A yong man say to me, "You should bet," "You should put your money on ze horses." He talk to me, zis yong man, of tens to one, and seex to one, and I listen. Zen yesterday comes, and zey pay ze salary at my school. Zey pay me five pound, and I put heem in my pocket and say, "To-morrow I will go to see ze horses-race and win much money." So I arrive here at ze course, m'sieur, and I walks round and see the makers of books, and I talk with a gentleman of sport who knows what he calls "a sure teep," and he tells me to put my five pound on "Crocodile," and takes me to a man who gives me a teecket, and lays me seexty to one against ze horse "Crocodile." Zen I say zat "Crocodile" will win me three hundred pound; and we will be happy, and my leetle Jules shall have a new coat, and Madame my spouse will buy herself a new gown, and I shall have great joy. And zen they run, the horses; and when zey have finish I go to my maker of books and request my money. And he say "Crocodile" is nowhere at all, and my five pound is lost; and ze man zat gave me ze "sure teep" is gone, and—hélas, m'sieur, now I have no salary to take home!'

And here the little man broke down and wept. Half-amused as I was at his story, I felt sorry for him, for I could well imagine that the loss of his five pounds would mean a good deal to him and to Madame his spouse and their boy Jules. When he had recovered himself a little, I talked further with him, and found that he was

a political refugee, and that he taught French in a boys' school at Doncaster. Convinced that his tale was genuine, I determined to help him. I had a five-pound note in my pocket for which I had no immediate need, and I made up my mind that he should have it. As I did not desire to pose as a benefactor, however, I resolved to adopt a little ruse.

'Well, sir,' said I, 'these fellows have swindled you, of course. To begin with, you should not have talked to the man who professed to know of a sure tip. All he wanted was your money'—

'Hélas, m'sieur, I am great fool—yes,' he interrupted, smiting his forehead. 'I have a head of wood. But it was the desire to carry home much money to my spouse and to cry, "Behold a fortune!"'

'And have you really nothing to go on with, sir?' I inquired.

He blushed and hung his head. 'Ah, m'sieur,' he said, 'not one centime. It is hard work to live on ze five pound a month. And now I have gamble heem away, my beautiful five-pound note, and zere will be no money for ze baker and ze butcher; and Madame my spouse will weep, and— Ah, wretched traitor zat I am!'

'Come, come, sir,' said I; 'don't give way. Here, you stay there awhile, and I'll go and see if I can't recover your money. Which of the betting-men was it that you gave your note to?'

'The gentleman called "Old Toby from London," m'sieur. He zat stands near the refreshments with a wonderful hat upon his head, and a long white coat.'

'Well, stay there,' said I, 'and I will see "Old Toby," and try to get your money; and away I went back to the crowd. But I had no intention of going near "Old Toby from London;" and after I had taken a turn through the people, I returned to the furze-bushes with my own five-pound note in my hand. I held it out to the little Frenchman, who received it with extravagant expressions of relief and delight.

'There's your five pounds, sir,' I said; 'and I hope you'll never be tempted to bet again.'

'Ah, m'sieur, indeed, no! I promise you on my sacred word, and I beseech you to accept my'— Here he broke off and looked fixedly from me to the note, which he had smoothed out. He turned pale, then red, then pale again.

'What's the matter, sir?' said I. 'Isn't that right?'

'M'sieur!' He drew his little figure to its full height. 'Zis is not my note. See, I take ze numbaire of heem—it is 200317. And see, ze numbaire of zis note is 521683. Ah—ah—m'sieur, I see how it is! Your generous heart weeps for my poor leetle Jules and for Madame my spouse, and you give me zis money out of your own pocket. Ah, beautiful sympathy—it makes me weep.' And he began to shed more tears. I turned to go, feeling somewhat confused. 'Good-day, sir,' I said.

The little Frenchman seized my hand. 'I zank you, m'sieur,' he said simply; 'I zank you from my heart.'

'You are very welcome,' said I, and hastened to leave him.

Before I had proceeded many yards, he ran after me. 'M'sieur,' said he, 'take zis leetle

object as a memento. You will zink of Hector Malan and his gratitude when you see it. It is nothing—a leetle medal zat my son Jules win at ze school, m'sieur. I zank you again, and I pray ze good God to reward you.'

I took the little bronze medallion which he put into my hand, and went on my way again. That night on my way to town I looked at the memento of my somewhat amusing adventure; it was a bronze medal rather larger than a crown piece. One side bore a figure of Learning bestowing a laurel wreath on a kneeling child; the other informed me that the medal had been presented to Master Jules Malan for his proficiency in mathematics. I put the little token in my purse and thought no more of it until some weeks later, when I happened to be dining with a fellow-artist at a restaurant, and once more came across it amidst a handful of loose change. I handed it over to my friend, and told him the story as we walked away together.

'If that medal were mine,' said he, 'I should attach a sort of superstitious reverence to it. I should look on it as a species of lucky-penny, and always carry it about my person.'

I laughed at the idea; but I put the bronze medallion back into my purse, and there it stayed. I attached no sort of value to it; but it seemed somehow to become a fixture, and had an inner compartment of my purse all to itself.

Some years went by. I worked hard at my profession, and began to be known as a painter of animal life, and especially of horses. A battle-scene of mine, 'Horses in War,' brought me an invitation from my old friends the proprietors of the *Illustrated Weekly* to go out as war-artist during the Franco-Prussian campaign. I was disposed to go before the invitation reached me. I was unmarried; I had no ties; and there seemed no reason why I should not see something of war at first hand. Accordingly, I accepted the invitation; and within a week I was with the Prussian forces near Saarbruck. I am not writing the history of that famous campaign, and I shall therefore pass over the preliminary events of the war, and go on to the time when the Prussians, having easily recovered from their first reverses, poured over Alsace and Lorraine and began to besiege Strasburg and Metz. I, in company with several other English war correspondents and artists, was with the advance corps of the attacking army, and had considerable difficulty in getting on at all. The Prussian military authorities had small love for special correspondents, and we were indebted solely to ourselves for whatever information we got. To me this official stand-offishness did not so much matter as to my companions, the special correspondents. My business was to make pictures, theirs to find news. Nevertheless, I found it hard work sometimes to get materials for my sketches; and the risks I occasionally ran were greater than those which I should have incurred had I mixed in the thick of the skirmishes, which went on continually.

It was a cold, damp afternoon in October, and we were lying half-way betwixt Bonzonville and Gravelotte, about nine miles from Metz. The Prussians were slowly advancing upon that city, and the air was continually disturbed by the

vibrations of their cannon. A regiment near which I had remained all day was engaged in skirmishing operations with a French battalion, and from the top of a slight eminence I was endeavouring to make an effective sketch of the scene. Suddenly a white fog rolled over the valley and wrapped both bodies of combatants in its thick folds. I endeavoured to regain my quarters; but the fog increased in density, and I soon found it impossible to make headway against it. For some time I remained motionless. The noise of cannon and musketry died away, and I heard the bugles sounding a retreat on both sides. Then I determined to go slowly back to my quarters near the village of Bonzonville. Unfortunately, I found it impossible to decide which was east and which west. I had been stationed on a round knoll or eminence, and I had walked about its crown so many times during my observations, that I was now unable to decide on the exact spot at which I had ascended it. At last, however, I came to a tree of which I seemed to have some recollection, and I descended the hill and walked, as I thought, towards Bonzonville.

By that time the plain was quiet, and I heard nothing save an occasional far-off bugle note. I walked on for an hour through the thick white fog, seeking for some familiar landmark. None came. I began to realise that I was lost. I stood and wondered what to do. Then I went forward again. A church clock struck the hour, six, close by. Clearly, I was near a village. I came to a road, and hastened along it, and presently fell into the hands of a French picket. I had walked west instead of east. I was at Gravelotte.

The picket marched me into the village, and led me before their colonel, a fierce-looking *militaire*, who glared at me from behind a table at which he was evidently writing despatches. 'What's this?' said he. 'A spy?'

Now, unfortunately for me, I cannot speak French, but my knowledge of German is extensive. I replied to the colonel's question in English. He shook his head. I then spoke in German, and his face grew dark. A soldier interpreted my answer.

'So?' said the colonel. 'A pretty story, indeed! He speaks German like a native, and professes to be an Englishman. Everybody knows that an Englishman can speak no other language than his own. An English artist, eh? See what papers he has.'

I drew all my papers from my breast-pocket voluntarily and handed them over. As ill-luck would have it, I had that morning made a plan of the surrounding country in my sketch-book. The French colonel looked at this narrowly, and nodded his head. 'As I thought,' said he. 'What is this but a map? Come, Mr Spy, what have you to say?'

'Tell the colonel,' said I to the interpreter, 'that I am no spy, but the special war correspondent of a great English newspaper, and that what I said before is true. These are my credentials—bid him look at them.'

The colonel tossed the papers aside contemptuously. 'What of them?' said he. 'They may have been stolen, forged—how do I know? He speaks German—he looks like a German—

he has maps, charts, drawings on him—*enfin*, he is a spy. Take him out and shoot him.'

A corporal tapped me on the shoulder and motioned me towards the door. I was so surprised at the colonel's last words that I stood motionless; but when I realised their full meaning I suddenly found tongue, and rated the whole group in forcible English. The colonel shrugged his shoulders, and repeated his commands, and the file of soldiers began to hustle me out. Before we reached the door, however, he stopped us. 'Spy,' said he, 'we will give you a chance. Tell us all you know of the Prussian movements, and we will consider your case.'

'I shall do no such thing,' said I. 'I am an English gentleman, and I will not do dirty work for either French or Prussian.'

'Take time,' said he. 'Think it over.—*Caporal*, call in a *sous-lieutenant* and two men.'

A young officer and two privates entered the room of the farmhouse in which we were standing and saluted.

'You see this man,' said the old colonel, pointing to me. 'Keep him safe till daybreak; then bring him to me.' He turned to me again: 'Think over my offer, Mr Spy. If you accept it, well; if you don't, you will be shot in the morning.'

The young officer and the two men marched me out into the fog again and took me to a cottage close by. I was placed in a room where a fire burnt on the hearth, and an oil-lamp shed some little light on a plain deal table. My guardians signed to me to sit down; and then one of the soldiers, after a whispered colloquy with the lieutenant, left the cottage, and presently returned with food and drink, which he set before me. Desperately placed as I was, I ate my supper; and when I had finished, filled and lighted my pipe. I thought things over, and could see no chance of escape.

'Monsieur,' said I, addressing the young officer who sat near me on the hearth, 'I shall certainly have to die to-morrow morning, if your colonel persists in his foolish conduct, and I should like to write a last letter to my friends. Will you have the goodness to provide me with writing materials?'

The lad responded in the affirmative, and bade one of his men fetch pen, ink, and paper. While he was gone, the young officer—who was certainly not more than eighteen or nineteen years of age, and had a frank, open face—looked at me curiously, and presently inquired if I was really an Englishman. He spoke English so well that I was surprised.

'Certainly I am,' I answered. 'And anybody but your colonel would have recognised as much. I am an Englishman, and what I represented myself to be when questioned.'

'I am sorry for you, sir,' said he. 'I wish I could help you.'

'Then promise to forward this packet for me,' said I. 'You can show it to your colonel if you like.'

He replied that he would do his best to oblige me; and I set to work at my letter. I wrote out a full account of my afternoon's adventures, and addressed it to the proprietors of my journal. Then I took off my watch and chain and rings

and laid them on the letter, intending to wrap them all up together. I had another ring in my purse, and I drew the latter from my pocket and opened it. As I did so, the bronze medallion escaped and fell from the table to the floor. The young officer stooped, and picking it up, laid it by my hand. The light from the lamp shone full on the inscription. He uttered an exclamation, and picked the medallion up again. I looked at him in astonishment. His face was flushed and eager; he stared at me with wide-open eyes.

'Monsieur!' he gasped—'monsieur!' For the love of Heaven, tell me—this medal, where did you get it?

'The medal?' I said. 'Oh, I got it some years ago in England.'

'But where?' he said. 'Where, monsieur? Ah, do not trifle with me—tell me where. For, see you, monsieur, I am Jules Malan!'

I looked at him wonderingly. This, then, was the Jules over whom the little Frenchman had waxed so eloquent on the racecourse at Doncaster.

'So you are Jules!' I said. 'Then you are the son of the man who gave me that medal?'

'And you are my father's benefactor,' he cried. 'It was you of whom he told us that day when he came home from the race.'

'Well, this is strange!' said I. 'But come, tell me something about your father. Is he back in his native France? Is he well? I have often thought of him.'

'Alas, sir, my dear father is dead, and my mother also. But let me tell you—we prospered in England, for my father had money left soon after your meeting with him, and he secured a free pardon for his political offences, and we returned to Paris. We were very happy, monsieur, until last year, and then my parents died. They never saw me in my uniform,' he added with a sad smile, as he turned the bronze medallion over and over in his fingers. 'Ah, monsieur, how well I remember winning this at the school in your foggy England! My father used often to talk of you and wonder if you preserved his memento. "See, thou, Jules," he would say, "if ever thou shouldst meet my benefactor and canst serve him, do it for my sake." And now I have met you, monsieur, and I would help you—and I cannot.'

'Never mind,' said I; 'perhaps your colonel will see reason in the morning.'

He shook his head at that, and relapsed into silence. For a long time no one spoke. The two soldiers nodded on the long settle; but Jules and I were wide awake. He kept looking wistfully at me: I for my part found it impossible to sleep. Somehow, I could not think the fierce old colonel meant to shoot me, but the mere idea was bad enough to howl over.

Morning came—gray, cold, cheerless. As the bugles sounded outside Jules and his men marched me into the colonel's presence. The old militaire was as stern and unbending as on the night before. He eyed me keenly.

'Well, Mr Spy,' said he, 'do you accept my offer of last night?'

My heart began to thump violently. 'No, sir,' I answered.

'Then you will be shot at once. Lieutenant—'

But Jules suddenly interrupted him. 'No, no, no, my colonel!' he cried, throwing his arms about me. 'No—no—it is my father's benefactor. Behold!'

He held up the bronze medallion. The colonel stared at us as if we had gone mad. 'What's this?' said he. 'Speak, Jules—here is some mystery.'

Jules told the story as only a Frenchman could tell it. When he finished, the old militaire shook my hand, embraced me, and bade me go my way. 'We are not ungrateful, we French,' said he naively.

I said farewell to him and to Jules, and within an hour regained my quarters at Bonzonville.

Well, that is a long time ago, and since then I have often called on Jules Malan and his pretty wife in Paris. We are great friends—for there is a tie between us which nothing can ever break. I shall never forget it, nor will those of my friends who know the history of my carefully treasured bronze medallion.

EXPERTS IN HANDWRITING.

At the trial of the now partially forgotten miscreant Neill, the blackmailing letters which led to the detection of his crimes were easily identified as his, owing to the handwriting being very peculiar. It might easily have happened, however, as in so many previous cases, that the evidence of an expert would have been required to identify the writer. Such testimony is very frequently given, and is so much a matter of course when any doubt attaches to the authorship of letters, that it is hard to believe that it was ever regarded as inadmissible. Yet such is the case. The reform of legal procedure has gone ahead greatly during the last half-century, and many antiquated and absurd restrictions have been swept away, that with regard to expert evidence among them. It was formerly held that to allow opinions to be expressed as to the authorship of writings would complicate the issues, open the door for invidious selection, and raise points on which an unlettered jury would be incompetent to pronounce. In the Fitzwalter Peerage case, for instance, which was tried in 1843, the evidence of the inspector of franks at the General Post-office was rejected, on the ground that his knowledge of the disputed writings could not have been acquired by acquaintance with the writers, the signatures in question occurring in a family pedigree made in 1751. A similar point was raised before a full bench of the Court of Common Pleas in 1852, and decided in the same sense. It was not until 1854 that a remedy was provided for this very inconvenient state of affairs by a clause in the Criminal Law Procedure Act of that year which permits the judge, if he sees fit, to admit the evidence of experts.

That the innovation was necessary is proved by the fact that the permission has been largely used ever since, and has proved of great service, particularly in cases of forgery. To mention only leading instances: the evidence of experts greatly furthered the ends of justice in the Roupell case,

the famous Tichborne trial, and the Whalley will case of more recent years. This class of testimony is also frequent in County Court actions, where the morals of many of the suitors permit them to have recourse to the most objectionable expedients to gain the day. It is true that specialists in handwriting, like those who devote themselves to medical and scientific subjects, do not always agree, and this renders it necessary to accept their evidence with caution; but the advantage of having points of difference and similarity, which would often escape the notice of the average man, brought clearly to light, is obvious and important. On this point the opinion of the late Lord Chief-justice Cockburn, who tried an unusual number of cases in which expert evidence was introduced, may fitly be quoted. 'The evidence of professional witnesses,' he said on one occasion, 'is to be viewed with some degree of mistrust, for it is generally given with some bias. But within proper limits, it is a very valuable assistance in inquiries of this kind. The advantage is that habits of handwriting as shown in minute points which escape common observation, but are quite observable when pointed out, are detected and disclosed by science, skill, and experience.'

Giving evidence in court is, however, only a comparatively small part of the business of a handwriting expert. His main occupation is advising private persons, especially those who have received anonymous communications. Threatening letters to Irish landlords and others, slanderous post-cards, mysterious epistles signed 'A True Friend'—in fact, all the missives which cowardly, venomous, and illiterate people of a certain class are fond of inditing, bring grist to the expert's mill. The recipient generally has some suspicion as to the origin of these documents, and wishes to have his suspicion either confirmed or set at rest. Valentines, too, furnish a good deal of work, even in these days when they are less popular than they were. During the later part of February there is a plentiful crop of inquiries respecting communications received on the 14th of that month. It may seem strange that any one should spend time and money in ascertaining the source of such banalities, but the undoubted fact that they do is only another illustration of the power of curiosity and the feeling of injured dignity. Besides such applications as we have mentioned, there are many others. Disappointed legates are apt to have doubts as to the authenticity of a will which has ignored them; holders of dishonoured bills desire to verify the signatures of acceptors or endorsers; and autograph hunters are often anxious as to the genuineness of some illegible scrawl reputed to be that of a man of note. In various ways, therefore, the small class of experts—there are said to be only two in the whole of London—find a good deal of employment.

Regarding the methods made use of to determine authorship, specialists are naturally reticent. Some of them have admitted, however, the nature of the leading principles which guide them. The philosophy of the matter rests mainly on the fact that it is very rare for any two persons to write hands similar enough to deceive a careful observer, unless one is imitating the other. 'Fists,' like faces, have all some special idiosyncrasy, and the

imitator has not merely to copy that of some one else, but to disguise his own. By careful and frequent practice he may succeed well enough to deceive the ordinary man, but is rarely successful in baffling the expert. Even the most skilful culprit cannot wholly hide his individuality, as he is sure to relapse into his ordinary method occasionally. Then, again, great care has to be used, and this can be detected by the traces of hesitancy, the substitution of curves for angles, and *vice versa*, which come out very plainly when the writing is examined under the microscope, as it usually is by the expert. A plan of detection which has been adopted with great success is to cut out each letter in a doubtful piece of writing, and paste all the *As*, *Bs*, &c., on separate sheets of paper. The process is also gone through with a genuine bit of caligraphy of the imitator or the imitated, as the case may be. Comparison almost invariably shows that the letters are less uniform if imitation has been attempted, the writer being occasionally betrayed into some approach to his ordinary caligraphy, or into momentary forgetfulness of some special point in the handwriting he is simulating. No point is too small to escape an expert's attention. The dotting of *ts*, the crossing of *ts*, the curls and flourishes, the intervals between the words, the thinness of the up-stroke, and the thickness of the down-stroke, are all noted and carefully compared. Where only a signature has been forged, and that by means of tracings from the original, the resemblance is often so exact as to deceive even the supposed author, but in these cases the microscope is generally effective in determining not merely the forgery but the method by which it was accomplished. It is some comfort to know that the cunning of the forger is overmatched by the scientific skill of the trained expert.

VISITANTS.

By ARTHUR L. SALMON.

THEY come to me at dawn of day
With whisperings of long ago,
And haunt me in the twilight gray.

With notes of a forgotten lay,
That once so well I used to know,
They come to me at dawn of day;

And when in dusky aisles I pray,
They come on wings of music low,
And haunt me in the twilight gray.

In scented blossoms of the May,
In winds that through my lattice blow,
They come to me at dawn of day.

They come from regions far away,
On summer showers or flakes of snow,
And haunt me in the twilight gray.

Through everything I do or say,
Some tokens of their presence flow;
They come to me at dawn of day,
And haunt me in the twilight gray.

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APPEAL CASES IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

AN appeal to the House of Lords is essentially and emphatically a last resort on the part of any litigant, and is also highly expensive. Moreover, it must be preceded by a long course of costly litigation in inferior courts, and an absolutely unassessable amount of mental wear-and-tear and of waste of moral tissue. But an explanation of the course of procedure may not come amiss, even to those who have no prospect of being concerned in a case appealed to the Highest Court of Appeal in the United Kingdom.

The first thing which strikes both the Appellant and the curious stranger about the House of Lords is, its utter unlikeness to any court of justice with which he has been familiar. The atmosphere is distinct and peculiar, and as different from a Sheriff Court, or Assize Court, or even the Inner House of the Court of Session, as can well be imagined. The whole area seems bathed in an air of calm repose and cool deliberation. There is no hurry and no excitement—no crowd of anxious witnesses, and no gallery of interested spectators.

If you have lost your case in all the lower courts, and are still convinced, or persuaded, that the law is really on your side—and strict law is the nearest approach to absolute justice we can look for in human society—and decide to appeal to the House of Lords, you find from the very outset that you are to have a wholly new experience. The familiar, if somewhat exasperating, 'Take Notice' of your former proceedings disappears, and you make acquaintance with a document addressed 'To the Right Honourable the House of Lords, the humble petition and appeal' of yourself, praying that the judgment in such-and-such a case be reviewed before Her Majesty the Queen in her High Court of Parliament.

But before even this petition can be lodged, you must obtain two Counsel of standing and repute to certify in formal terms to the Lords that they 'humbly conceive this to be a proper

case to be heard before your Lordships.' This petition must be printed on parchment—a costly item in the luxury of Appeal. With this petition, security has to be lodged for due payment of the costs to be incurred—namely, a 'recognisance' to the amount of five hundred pounds and a bond for two hundred pounds.

Supposing all these preliminaries to be completed, then the case for each side forming the subject-matter of Appeal has to be set forth for My Lords. It must be clearly printed in large type on quarto-sized sheets, and bound in book-form. Forty copies must be lodged, and of these, ten must be bound in purple cloth, with parchment slips inserted at each part of the case, thus dividing the book into sections—namely, 'Petition and Appeal,' 'Appellant's Case,' 'Appellant's Index,' 'Respondent's Case,' and 'Respondent's Index.'

No witnesses are called, of course, in an Appeal to the Lords, and therefore there is no cross-examination, no browbeating, and no sparring between Counsel. The facts are supposed to have been already thoroughly thrashed out, and it remains but to deliver the final and irrevocable fiat of the law upon the law of the case.

The ultimate arbiters who constitute this Supreme Court of Appeal are, nominally, all the Peers of the realm. Every Peer, of whatever rank, is entitled to sit and hear arguments in any case. But in practice the lay Peers, as distinguished from the legal Peers, do not attend, and they never attempt to exercise their constitutional right. The judges who actually constitute the House of Lords as a legal tribunal are—the Lord Chancellor, the Lords of Appeal-in-Ordinary—who are life Peers created for this special purpose—and such other members of the House of Lords as have held high judicial posts in the past—ex-Lord Chancellors and the like. Three such Peers are required to form a quorum, no matter how many lay Peers may choose to attend at the hearing or voting. In practice, though not by statute, both the hearing and the verdict are left entirely to the Law Lords.

During the hearing, the Lord Chancellor in his robes comes down from the woolsack and takes a seat along with his legal colleagues on the benches nearest to the bar, on the other side of which is accommodation for ten or a dozen Counsel and legal agents. Before each of the Lords is placed a small movable table to hold his papers and books of reference, &c. And then the business begins. But it is conducted in a very different manner from the proceedings of which you have had unhappy experience in the courts below. Here are no hurried witnesses, excited agents, anxious 'parties,' and dictatorial barristers.

The facts are before the House, in clear print and compact and condensed form. The Counsel for the Appellant proceeds to argue against the judgment of the lower court in the light of the facts and on points of law. But he does not orate, and argument takes rather the form of friendly debate in ordinary conversational tones. There is no hurry; and as points are raised and cases are cited, the attendants are engaged in bringing books of reference, &c., so that the Lords may verify quotations or refresh their memories. Now and again a Peer puts a quiet question, which either throws a new light or leads to fresh inquiry. Everything proceeds with calm and dignified pace, and for an example of patient, dispassionate perseverance there is nothing to excel the House of Lords sitting as a Court of Appeal.

When the Counsel for the Appellant has stated his case, and the Counsel for the Respondent has, in the same conversational manner, replied; when the Lords have heard both sides with equal patience, and have elicited all the information they require to form a judgment on the various points presented, then the House adjourns, and the time comes for you to exercise patience. For when judgment will be delivered no man can say. The Peers require time for consideration, and the law must not be jostled.

At last, however, you hear from your agent that your case is on the paper for to-morrow's business, the House sitting at 10.30 A.M. Down you go to Westminster, and find yourself in the lobby, perhaps, with a small crowd of other anxious and excited Appellants and Respondents, whose cases are also down on the paper for judgment. Here also come the gentlemen in wigs and robes, who, being professionally engaged, may enter the sacred precincts by the big doors; while their brethren, equally learned in the law, but not at the moment professionally engaged, must wait their opportunity like ordinary civilians.

We will assume that you have obtained entry to hear what is officially called the 'Consideration' of your case. You find the appearance of the House somewhat different from what it was during debate. The Lord Chancellor is on the woolsack; and other four Peers, say, are on the benches near the bar, two on each side, and each with the little table again before him. Perfect silence reigns, and calm and deep peace pervade the atmosphere—whatever may be the turmoil in your own bosom.

By-and-by the Lord Chancellor rises from the woolsack, and, with slow and deliberate pace, descends to the clerk's table. Standing at the table, he begins to read from his manuscript:

'My Lords—in this case of *A. versus B.*'—and so on to the deliverance of his own opinion on the points. Then he returns to the woolsack, and a Law Lord rises and reads his opinion, perhaps at some length, but with clearness and argumentative force. Then rise in succession the other Law Lords, each not delivering but reading his opinion, some giving reasons at length, and some, perhaps, merely concurring in a few words with opinions already read.

Some Law Lords are habitually minute and painstaking in setting forth their reasons for arriving at conclusions, and in marshalling the arguments by which they fortify their reasons; but other Law Lords are as habitually terse and reticent, frequently concurring without stating either reasons or argument.

This, however, is the rule of the House, as fixed and immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians: that each Peer must read, not recite, his judgment from his own written or printed text, and he must read it standing, as if he were addressing the whole House, and not a long array of empty benches.

When all the Law Lords have finished reading their opinions, you realise, let us say, that they are unanimously in favour of the decision of the court below—which means the dismissal of your Appeal. This being so, the Lord Chancellor rises, but remaining by the woolsack, and turning towards right and left, as if the silent benches were peopled with listening Peers, thus pronounces, without pause or punctuation: 'My Lords, the motion before your Lordships' House is, that this Appeal be dismissed. Contents? Non-contents? The Contents have it. The judgment of the House is that this Appeal be dismissed, and that the Appellant do pay to the Respondent the costs of this Appeal.'

And all is over. Nothing remains for you but to pay the piper. The end is final, and you have only the consolation of reflecting that the highest legal luminaries in the world have, in the most impartial and dispassionate tribunal ever constituted, regarding your case in the light of strict law, and on principles of pure justice—decided that you are in the wrong. It has been a costly experience, but finality is not to be bought cheaply.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XX.

Oh, see ye not that bonnie road

That winds about the fernie brae?

That is the road to fair Eliland,

Where thou and I this night must gae.

THOMAS THE RHYMER.

It is three months since Pomona's birthday, and August is brooding hotly over the land, blazing on the poppies and the dusty roads, and throwing great heavy elm-tree shadows on the meadows, and setting the air quivering over the stubble-fields. Those three months have not been un-mixed happiness to either Pomona or Sage; what fortunate mortal ever had three months' happiness un-mixed?

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Lady Lester's life was ebbing gradually away; and after another fortnight of trying to keep up the delusion that she would be better soon, and the pitiful pretence that Pomona was enjoying the season, with all the time an aching heart of anxiety, to be kept hidden like the Spartan boy's fox, though it drove with her in the park, was her partner at all the balls, curtsied with her at the drawing-room, jarred with its sad voice on the gay music of opera or concert, the girl was allowed to go down to Beechfield to share with the devoted maid the infinitely sweet, sad duty of caring for her mother's weakness and soothing her weariness.

'I have never had you so much to myself before, Mona,' Lady Lester would say; and the girl would hardly be persuaded to leave her room or to move out of reach of her hand.

'Why should I not have been always with you like this?' she used to protest, wondering at the tyrannical yoke under which we wilfully place our necks, filling up our life, short as it is, with a useless, wearisome routine, that is no pleasure or profit to ourselves or any one else, crowding out our real heart's happiness.

Now and then Lady Lester was well enough to be carried down-stairs, and just once or twice to be drawn in her chair along the terrace, and to stop for half an hour under the great fragrant branches of the cedar, looking with dreamy, far-away eyes at the sunny park, which had a strange unfamiliar look, as familiar things often have to dying eyes, perhaps from looking beyond them to the better country.

That coincidence of Maurice's calling the day Sage was at Beechwood was not anything very remarkable after all, except in Sage not knowing of his being in the neighbourhood, and even that was merely from her failing to realise that Crowcombe Rectory, where Maurice's old uncle lived, was within a drive of Beechfield, and that he and his wife and Lady Lester had known each other for many years. Why, even Pomona had found out that Maurice was related to their old neighbour at Crowcombe, and that, though he had not been there since he was a child, he was not unlikely to be staying there soon, so that it was no great surprise to her to see his card with those of Mr and Mrs Irby.

Since that first meeting with Maurice at Mrs Coppleston's, she had met him repeatedly in that curious way in which, in the stir-about of life, two atoms that have never met before, once brought together, are continually jostling one another in a manner most incomprehensible considering the many millions of atoms concerned. After the first it was not, of course, always accidental that Maurice should be in the park at the time Pomona took her early ride; and after a chance encounter, when Maurice was calling one afternoon at the same time as Pomona at Mrs Coppleston's, that lady gave a helping hand, and took Maurice with her to several houses where she knew Miss Lester was to be met.

And now, by some strange caprice of Dame Fortune, who, like other ladies, appears sometimes the most openly manoeuvring of matchmakers, these two were taken out of the gay throng, where Pomona would have been so surrounded by admirers that Maurice would have hardly had a chance to come near her, and sent off, as

it were, to the conservatory, or to sit out on the stairs through ever so many dances, they two by themselves. Pomona, to be sure, was nursing her mother, and Maurice was helping his uncle in some business of a tiresome, pottering description, that at once worried and interested, irritated and amused, the old man. But Crowcombe Rectory and Beechfield are only three miles apart, and Mr Irby often wanted to hear how Lady Lester was; and when Pomona went for her daily walk or ride, on which Lady Lester insisted, what more natural than that those two should meet under the midsummer trees, or in the deep, ferny lanes, or by the lake?

I do not think either Maurice or Pomona realised whither they were drifting during those midsummer days. With Pomona it was part of the strange, unreal life she was leading; ordinary conventional life seemed to be set aside; society and all its works were at a distance; she wore the same cotton frock all day long; there was no grand dinner spread at eight o'clock, but a tray brought up into the old schoolroom any time she pleased; and so there seemed nothing out of the way in her daily meetings with Maurice, and the intimacy that those daily meetings brought about.

I am quite sure that at first Maurice had no intention of disloyalty to Sage. It cannot be held disloyal to dream wild, impossible lovely dreams; who can help their dreams? Nor can it be held disloyal in a poet or painter to draw in words or pigments beauty other than that of his own liege lady. Those days were a long intoxicating dream to Maurice, full of a fascination from which there was no escape, even if escape had been desired; they were a poem of sweetest melody, a picture in which he and Pomona were represented as they were in Ludlow's picture.

It was always now 'poor, little Sage' when he thought of her, for he did think of her, and wrote too, and more frequently and more tenderly than heretofore. Poor, little Sage! I am afraid, when that feeling of pity begins to creep in, the love is a little on the wane, pity being only akin to love, not by any means the same.

When Maurice and Sage met in London, the day following that on which Sage went to Beechfield, there was much to hear and explain on both sides. Sage found a much more sympathetic listener in him, when she expatiated on Pomona's perfections, than she did in her father. But then, of course, Dr Merridew had not seen her, so could not be expected to understand the charm; and Mr Ludlow's want of appreciation was one of those unaccountable perversities that the most excellent men are subject to. But Maurice agreed with all she said about Pomona in a quite satisfactory way, not too heartily, which is a very mistaken form of agreement, and apt to modify the unlimited praise which might otherwise be bestowed on the object under discussion.

But Maurice did not originate much in Pomona's praise, only echoed, sometimes even with a slight qualification, what Sage said of her, and left Sage with the impression that he would soon admire Pomona almost as much as she did herself, and that she had drawn his attention to several points he had not discovered for himself, though he quite appreciated them.

'And, Maurice,' Sage said, 'I want you to promise that you will not tell Pomona anything

about our engagement—indeed, you had better not talk to her about me, or it might slip out without your meaning it. I have quite set my heart on telling her myself, and I wonder why I have never told her already, for she is so sympathetic and nice. Do you know, Maurice, I was very near telling my aunt, Lady Lester, all about you, for she guessed, I don't know how, that there was some one I cared for; and she asked if you were very nice, very tender, very true, as if she almost knew all about you already. When I go down again, I will tell her.'

But Sage did not go down again, nor did she see Pomona during the fortnight she remained in London except dressed to go to the drawing-room, a lovely scene of satin and billowy tulle and ostrich feathers and diamond stars, too exquisite to be approached except at a very respectful distance, and too far off for any confidences to be possible.

Kitty was never tired of hearing that wonderful dress described, and after a few repetitions, Sage found herself making little additions, to heighten the effect. Kitty required a good deal of amusement and humouring in those days, for the headache and loss of appetite had not been so entirely mythical, and Sage found a very feverish, tossing, little person in bed when she came home from Beechfield.

'Maurice must not come,' was Sage's first thought; and Dr Merrieworth shrugged his shoulders, and wondered if smallpox or the plague would have kept him away from Sage's mother; and Sage, keen in defence of her hero, read the thought, and protested. 'Of course he will want to come; but it's for my own sake I'm going to ask him to stop away. It will make me so anxious and bother me, if he comes; and I don't want to think of anything but little Kit.'

And so she wrote an imperative, little note, smelling strongly of carbolic, and had to write it over again because a sudden tear splashed down unexpectedly on the paper at the thought of how, if she took the fever and died, she would entreat, with her dying breath, that Maurice might not be told, lest he should run the risk of infection.

Of course, that peremptory note had the immediately opposite effect of bringing Maurice to Dalston, as, deep in her deceptive little heart, Sage knew it would do, though she scolded him with tears of loving pride in her eyes for his rashness and disregard of her wishes; and she made such a glorification of his courage and self-devotion all the rest of the day, that Dr Merrieworth could not resist observing that a doctor did as much and a great deal more every day of his life and thought nothing of it.

'But you will not come again, dear,' she pleaded; 'promise me you will not come. I shall really, really be happier if you don't; and I shall be so busy, too, nursing Kitty, it will take up every moment of my time. I will send you a line every day to say how she is; and if you will write sometimes, it will be better even than seeing you, for I shall not feel anxious about you.'

Kitty was too ill during the days that followed to allow time for much thought, even of Maurice, in her anxious little nurse; and when the worst was over and Kitty, grown and long-legged and large-eyed, was creeping back to life, Maurice was called away again down to Crowcombe, to

help Mr Irby in that business to which reference has been made, and which brought him again in contact with Pomona, who had gone down to Beechfield a few days previously.

'Have you seen Pomona?' Sage asked in nearly all her letters. 'Have you been to Beechfield? Have you heard how Lady Lester is?'

And sometimes in his reply Maurice would mention that he had met Miss Lester, who looked well; or that his aunt had driven over to ask for Lady Lester, who was rather better; but he did not think it necessary—and why should he?—to recount how these meetings with Pomona were almost of daily occurrence. Nor did he relate how one afternoon, when he had called to inquire, Lady Lester had been on the terrace, and by some strange caprice, seeing that she had not seen any of her most intimate friends for weeks, expressed a wish to see him. He had sat for a few minutes on the stone balustrade by the side of her chair, under the great dark cedar at the end of the terrace, and she had smiled at him with the wan loveliness over which the cold shadow of death seemed already falling. He had helped to move her chair when she was tired and wanted to go in; and he had done it so gently and skilfully, that she had thanked him, and said she had never crossed the terrace with so little shaking. As she bade him good-bye, she smiled at him with a kindness out of proportion to the small service he had done her; and with a sudden impulse, he stooped and kissed the transparent hand that lay in his, and turned away with a strangely beating heart and unaccountable agitation, feeling as if, without a word, some understanding had been come to between them, some trust had been conferred and accepted; and meeting Pomona coming in from the terrace with a shawl that had been dropped, he took it almost authoritatively out of her hand, as if he had a right to care for her.

He went back to Crowcombe that evening more in a dream than ever, spell-bound by the magic of the great enchantress, love, with whose power he had often played, and whose growing bonds he had lightly twisted about him, conscious that at any moment he could break loose from them, like Samson from the Philistines' new cords. But now, like Samson shorn of his strength, he could no longer go out as before and shake himself free.

Mr Irby won every game of backgammon that evening, which was a great gratification to the old man, till he began to suspect that Maurice was not paying any attention to the game, which robbed his triumph of half its splendour; and his gentle old wife had to intervene with the bedroom candles to prevent an outburst of irritability.

'It was my fault, Richard, for I quite forgot to give him the letter that came by the second post, and I expect his thoughts were with his young lady in London.'

Oh! poor little Sage, I wish it had been so!

CHAPTER XXI.

Our eyes see all around in gloom or glow—
Hues of their own, fresh borrow'd from the heart.

KEBLE.

'DEAR LUDLOW—Thank you very much for your proposal that Kitty should come and recruit at Scar. She does not pick up so quickly as I should like and expected; and Sage, too, is not up to the mark, overdone a bit with the nursing and

anxiety about Kitty, though she declares she is all right; and I think sea-air will do them both good. The boys are going with their cousins to Broadstairs; so I will pack off the two girls to you the beginning of the week, and thank you heartily for the invitation.—Yours sincerely,
JOHN MERRIDEW.

There is a legend that ladies always put the most important part of their letter in the post-script, and I think men sometimes do the same, for in this instance Dr Merridew added: 'Do you hear anything of your young friend, Moore?'

Back again at Scar! Both Sage and Kitty would have declared any time since they left it, last September, that it was the one thing of all others they desired.

There was little alteration at Scar Farm since last year, except that Mrs Stock came out to meet them with a widow's cap surrounding her kind little face; and Job's coat no longer hung on the kitchen door, or his pipe on the mantel-piece, and all the bedrooms were adorned with a black-framed funeral card with a weeping willow and an urn, and a long inscription in the farmer's praise. Otherwise, the death of the master made little difference in the house or in the farm either, where, as a matter of fact, Mrs Stock had done most of the business for years past.

The studio was in no way altered; and in the bow window was spread just such another attractive-looking tea as had so often invited the attention of the Merridews' healthy appetites, but which now had no charms for poor Kitty, and to which also Sage could not attend till she had got her patient safely to bed. Even then, she sat longer than was necessary by Kitty's bedside, with an unusual shrinking from a *tête-à-tête* with her friend; and she had half a mind to ask Mrs Stock to bring her some supper up-stairs, and tell Mr Ludlow she did not like to leave Kitty. But it must be done sooner or later, and she might as well to-day as to-morrow face the inevitable question: 'Well, how is Maurice? When did you hear from him last?'

But after all, she had not to answer that question, for Mr Ludlow did not mention Maurice till tea was done, and then he said: 'I heard from Maurice this morning. I asked him to come down for a bit while you are here; and he hopes to do so.'

Just think what this silly little Sage would have missed if she had decided not to come down. She would have missed a beautiful, beautiful evening, with a sunset as heavenly as any of last year's, even that at the Landslip; the exquisite delight of seeing it all again unchanged, of meeting the old friends, of passing down the village street and getting a greeting from almost every door; finding her way to the beach, and seeing the grand old Scar Head growing dusky against the orange sky, just as it did that evening when some one had come out of the very sunset.

'Why, Sage,' Ludlow said, 'I do believe Scar air has done you good already. You don't look the same girl I met just now at Shingle Station.'

And she answered with a laugh of great happiness: 'I don't feel the same.' But she did not go on to explain that those few words of his

about Maurice had worked the cure, brought the light into her eyes and the colour into her cheeks, painted the sunset with more vivid crimson and gold, cast a glory over the sea, put a music into the gruff greetings, a sweetness into the air, and an additional grandeur to the rugged old cliff.

Sage felt a wild exuberance of spirits, which was hardly natural to her, being generally of a placid, undemonstrative nature, and enjoying things quietly; but this was the result of a sudden rebound from the depression that had been growing on her for the last month. It was all very well for her to go on telling herself over and over again that everything was quite as it should be; that she would much rather Maurice kept quite clear of all risk of infection, and that he only did so because she had so earnestly implored him. She could not help now and then putting herself in his place, and wondering if commands or entreaties or even threats would have kept her away if he had been breathing infected air? Of course he was away from London; but sometimes, when she could not sleep, and the nights were hot and breathless, and Kitty was restless and fretful, and the inexhaustible patience of the tender little nurse was sorely tried, she would have a slight rebellious swelling at the heart, with the thought of what a short journey it was up from Crowcombe, and of how soothing it would be to an aching head to rest for a minute or two on his shoulder. His letters, too, had been less frequent of late, which was another thing she severely contested with herself that she much preferred; she would not for worlds that he should feel obliged to write; and yet—and yet—if only he had known how, after one of those bad nights with Kitty, which invariably were followed by a day of great prostration, the sight of a letter on the table made life easier, and hope and cheerfulness more possible, he would have been glad to write constantly.

He sent her a box of flowers now and then, the kindness of which she exaggerated, poor little soul, to something quite heroic, though, man-like, he packed them so badly, usually also selecting geraniums for the purpose, that they were all knocked to pieces in the post, and presented a poor appearance when taken out by her grateful fingers.

When the idea of going to Scar was first mooted, Sage was quite sure that Maurice would come up to see her before they started, even if he did not travel down with them. But he only wrote to say how glad he was they were going down to Scar, and that he hoped the sea-breezes would soon set Kitty up again. He had not said a word about there being any chance of his coming to Scar, but that, Sage told herself now, was just like him, so that it should be a delightful surprise to her. And this also accounted for his not coming up before she left London, as, of course, they would meet so soon that it was not worth while.

Oh, the difference the prospect of his coming made in everything! Little Scar and the great cliff beyond and the wide sea and the sunset sky need have felt no vanity from Sage's rapturously expressed admiration; for I have an impression that Dalston, frowzy, dusty, and fatigued, would have looked quite as beautiful to her if she had

expected to see Maurice Moore walking up the street.

Owen Ludlow noticed the change in her with great content, and as he sat on the great rock by her side and heard her gay young voice chattering on with more life and merriment in its tones than was usual to it, he felt greatly relieved and reassured that it was only fatigue and anxiety about Kitty that had made her look so white and large-eyed and out of spirits when she first arrived.

'I must have as much of you as I can, little Sage,' he said, as they slowly climbed the steep little street where lights twinkled out from small windows and open doors at which stood groups of men who bade them a gruff good-night. 'I must have as much of you as I can; for when Maurice comes, he will monopolise my little friend, I expect, and I shall be left in the lurch.'

And Sage laughed a happy little laugh, and passed her hand coaxingly under Ludlow's arm. It was so pleasant once more to have it taken for granted that Maurice would want to monopolise her; there had been very little symptom of such a desire of late.

'When will he come?'

'Oh, very soon, very soon,' the painter said, pressing the little hand against his side. 'I'll wager that I shan't be allowed more than a day or two of my little friend's company.'

And Sage went up to bed with those words. 'Very soon, very soon,' ringing in her ears, keeping time to her footsteps, that were fain to dance for very happiness on the creaking boards of the farmhouse staircase.

LEATHERN WINGS.

By FRANK FINN, F.Z.S.

IN marvelling at the strange forms of extinct animals which science is constantly bringing before us, we are apt to forget that many living creatures are quite as wonderful as those which have passed away. Those weird winged reptiles, the Pterodactyls, for instance, are not more strangely removed in structure and habits from their reptilian relations than are the modern bats from other beasts. In all essential points near relatives of such humble earth-dwellers as the hedgehog, mole, and shrew, the bats are nevertheless far the most aerial of vertebrate animals at the present day. Not one of them is as well fitted for walking as for flight; the membrane which joins the long fingers, leaving only the thumb free, extends down the animal's sides to his ankles and between the legs, so distorting those members that in their owner's ungraceful hobble on the ground his knees stick upwards and outwards. Thus, though he is more at ease when climbing, and can suspend himself comfortably by either thumb- or toe-nails, the greater part of the bat's waking life is spent on the wing. In the air he is most at home, and displays powers of flight far greater than those of most birds. He may not have the speed and endurance of some of the feathered folk; but for facility of evolution in a confined space he would be difficult to rival, as any one will admit who has had a bat-hunt in a room.

Two experiences of my own rise vividly before

me as I write. In the first instance, the bat was a 'flying-fox' of about the size of a pigeon, which one night entered my bedroom in a Zanzibar hotel. Becoming conscious in the darkness that some flying creature was passing and repassing over my head, I got out of bed and lighted the lamp, and found my visitor performing the circuit of the room with a steady even flight, very different from the flittering progress of our own little species. He will soon get tired of that, I thought; and closing the windows, sat down to wait till he should be wearied, and allow me to capture him for the Zoo at home. Several minutes passed, and I began to think more active measures necessary, as he showed no signs of sinking exhausted; so, seizing a mosquito net, I started on an impromptu fox-hunt. I don't know how long it lasted, but the quarry put the light out twice by his flapping pinions, showed most disconcerting agility in rising from the floor and unhitching himself from the wall, when he was brought down or settled to rest, and finally escaped through a crevice in the party-wall which separated me from a passage with an open window. Whereon I sought again my virtuous couch, vexed and perspiring, but with a greatly increased respect for a bat's power of wing.

My next bat-fowling experience was a rather different one, though the result was the same. The species in this case was our English long-eared bat, and the scene of the hunt a room in a laboratory, whither I had gone with a friend to work at night. Wishing to examine the little creature alive, and then release it, we pursued it with dusters for about an hour. At the end of that time, as we were far more exhausted than the bat, and had lodged most of the dusters on the top of a high cupboard, it occurred to my companion that he did not want to catch the poor thing, and we opened the window and left it to its own devices.

In addition to displaying such activity on the wing, bats have considerable power of extended flight, the Indian flying-fox having been known to board a ship two hundred miles from land; and they are found, with birds, on very small and remote oceanic islands. These they must have reached by fair flight, unless they had the good fortune to meet with a floating log; for, though a bat swims well, it would probably find much difficulty in rising from the water, did it settle to rest, as many birds are known to do.

Yet, though the bat has so well won its way to what is popularly supposed to be the realm of the birds, it has not received much favourable recognition from humanity, which lavishes adulation on the undeserving. For 'the light-minded fowl,' as a Greek dramatist calls them, treat their gift of wings with a sad lack of appreciation. Let a bird get on an oceanic island free from terrestrial foes, and unless it is obliged to fly for its food, it proceeds to wax fat and lazy, and in the end loses its power of flight altogether. It finds out the short-sightedness of this policy when, in after-ages, man arrives at that island. But that is by the way.

The bat's weakness, however, as well as its strength, lies in its wings. If the delicate finger-bones, which stretch the membrane like umbrella-ribs, or the membrane itself, be damaged, the

animal is disabled. Indeed, a method of capturing bats practised by the inhabitants of some of the South Sea islands shows that the wily savage has appreciated this. Armed with a thorny bush on the end of a long bamboo, he stealthily approaches a flying-fox which has settled to feed on a fruit-tree, when a dexterous blow will tear the bat's skinny wing and bring it to the ground, an acceptable addition to the hunter's commissariat. The flying-foxes are relished as food by the inhabitants of the countries where they are found; and certainly a creature which lives on fruit ought to be good eating. Their heads are wonderfully like that of a miniature fox; and their large eyes suggest that they find their way by sight, of which sense the small insectivorous bats would seem to be almost independent, as blinded specimens, in the experiments of Spallanzani, proved to be able to avoid obstacles to their flight as easily as those which could see. This power bats owe to their highly developed sense of touch, the large sensitive surface offered to the atmosphere by the broad naked wings enabling them to perceive an object before they touch it, probably by the difference in the resistance of the air. And the huge ears and complicated nose-appendages found in so many insectivorous species also subserve the purpose of guidance, though they certainly do not add to the animal's appearance, the facial aspect of some bats being past description hideous, while they are just as offensive to the nose as to the eye. One very ugly naked species exhales so detestable a perfume from a pouch under its chin, that an artist who was taking the portrait of one of these delectable animals was almost made sick by the stench. One cannot wonder that the attributes of the blood-sucking vampire have been wrongly given to several hideous American bats, especially to that species named '*Vampyrus spectrum*,' from a mistaken notion, indeed, since it is frugivorous. There being no flying-foxes in the New World, some of the insect-eaters have adapted themselves to a fruit diet.

Nevertheless, two species have been proved to suck the blood of other animals, though these are not nearly so ill-looking as some of their harmless relations. And in the Old World there are bats which prey on the smaller members of their own family, and on other creatures that they can catch, such as birds and frogs. Considering the general attributes of the bat-kind, it is not to be wondered at that mankind should have borrowed their claws and angular wings wherewith to garnish those grotesque creations of the imagination known as dragons. It is true that it has been suggested that the Pterodactyls gave the first idea of dragons to humanity; but this is unlikely. In the first place, several geological periods intervene between the last Pterodactyl and the first man; and in the second place, the artistic mind notoriously revels in the production of monsters whereof it may be just as safely affirmed that they never could have existed, as that they never did. It has given the 'worm' of our ancestors a rhinocerotie head, birds' feet, and an incandescent breath—why, therefore, should it flee to fossils for the paltry detail of wings, when the bat was close at hand to supply them?

Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the Pterodactyls were somewhat dragon-like, especi-

ally the larger species; for though most were of moderate size, not exceeding that of a crow or a flying-fox, and some, even, no larger than sparrows, yet the largest attained a spread of wing of more than four fathoms. These wings, though like those of the bats in being expansions of the skin extending to the limbs, differed from them somewhat in detail. In the bat we have a free thumb and four immensely lengthened fingers; in the Pterodactyl the fingers were free from the wing membrane, except that corresponding to our little finger. This in the volant reptile was the largest of all, a long, tapering, jointed rod of bone, and the main support of the wing, which was a long and narrow one, something like that of a swallow in outline. As the Pterodactyl's hind-limbs, like those of the bat, are weak and more or less involved in the wing-membrane, it is extremely unlikely that it could sit up and perch or walk like a bird, as some have suggested; its terrestrial or arboreal promenades, therefore, more probably took the form of a bat-like crawl on all-fours. Its head, however, was more like a bird's than a bat's, having a long snout, armed with teeth or a beak, or both, and large eyes. Feeding on insects, and probably also on fish, the Pterodactyls must have borne some resemblance, when on the wing, to the terns or sea-swallows of our own day, with their large heads and long narrow wings. Whether, as they wheeled and swooped over a shoal of fish driven to the surface of the sea by the rush of the great reptilian whales of the period, they indulged in the vocal performances of the modern sea-bird, is of course only a matter for speculation. Probably they were more gifted with voice than our modern reptiles. And these are not entirely dumb, as the bellowing alligator and chattering house-lizard prove; while, on the other hand, some birds have got no further than the well-known reptilian hiss. To talk of the colours of Pterodactyls may also seem to recall the method of the German scientist who, in the solitude of his study, evolved the camel out of his inner consciousness; yet we constantly find that the more aerial creatures are the more brightly decorated; the little 'flying-dragons' of the present day, lizards whose long movable ribs support a skinny parachute, are as gaily coloured as butterflies, while even their terrestrial relatives are often exceedingly beautiful. So that it is more than possible that some at least of the Pterodactyls, like Mr Oscar Wilde's dove, rejoiced in 'silvered wing and amethystine throat.'

Speculation fails us somewhat, however, when we begin to inquire into the origin of these old pliers of leathern pinions. The links which bind these strange creatures to other reptiles are wanting. And, curiously enough, as far as fossils go, the case is similar with the bats; for all fossil bats are just as truly bats as are the living species. Fortunately, however, there exists a 'living fossil,' which, though it could not have been the ancestor of these flying beasts, yet very clearly points out the way in which such anomalous creatures might be developed. This is the *Galeopithecus* of the East Indies, a creature which is neither cat nor bat nor lemur, and yet has been at different times called by all these names, and finally herded with the mole and shrew tribe, mainly because it will not fit in anywhere else. It is a tree-climber, and apparently a vegetable feeder, and is one of

those creatures which fly by a parachute formed by a flap of skin along the sides, extended by the limbs; the most perfect of parachutists, for this web extends between the hind-legs and between the toes, enabling the animal to glide as far as seventy yards at a time. Besides some points in its internal anatomy, the webbed hind-feet forbid us to regard the 'cat-monkey' as a surviving incipient bat; but, nevertheless, from some form very much like it we may easily imagine that the present rivals of the birds were developed. That leather will ever surpass feathers as a material for wings is very unlikely; the Pterodactyls, though in the height of their power when the birds began in the feeble-winged, half-reptilian *Archæopteryx*, have yet entirely died out ages ago, without leaving any descendants. Skin-winged reptiles had reached their highest perfection, and a different stock supplanted them, which flew by feathers. One reason of this may have been that a feather-wing is so much less liable to irreparable injury than one of membrane; and the Pterodactyl's wing, stretched on a single support, must have been thrown out of gear even more easily than a bat's. Were not birds essentially creatures of the day, for true night-fliers are few among them in proportion to the many that love the light, it is possible that the bats themselves might never have conquered their present share of the empire of the air.

LESS THAN KIN.

CHAPTER II.

TWENTY years bring changes into all lives, and those of Mildred and Charles Russell were not likely to be exempt from the universal law. The vicarage of Denleigh, which had been their home for all that time, had been the scene of both births and deaths; and by the time that their eldest son was twenty-five, and Ena a pretty, gray-eyed damsel of twenty, there was but one other child, Bijou, a fragile, petulant, self-willed, little mortal of twelve, left to share with the other two their parents' love. For that she had not an equal claim with Dick to talk of 'father and mother,' Ena never dreamt.

The immediate removal of the family from the Hampshire curacy to the Yorkshire town had of course made the keeping of Jack's secret a comparatively easy matter; the more so since, from the day he received it until the present, Sir George Daintry had deigned to take no notice of the letter which gave him information as to the existence and present position of his grandchild. So Ena had grown up exactly as her father desired, regarding herself as the eldest daughter of the house, and claiming as her right the affection which she most fully returned. Never for one moment had either husband or wife regretted the adoption of the baby, who had won for herself so warm a corner in their hearts.

As to Dick, before he left home, four years ago, he had believed that the world contained no one so bright and helpful and lovely as his sister Ena. In which, of course, he was mistaken. But his was a pardonable error, and one to be rather cultivated than discouraged on the part of brothers as a race.

Except for the loss of the little ones, upon whose waxen faces hot tears had fallen, and each of whom existed still as a memory in at least two hearts, poverty had been the one trouble that had fallen upon the vicarage. The small private means which had emboldened Mr Russell to accept his present incumbency had some time ago been swallowed up in the failure of a bank. Happily, Dick had then just completed his university course, and was already looking out for a tutorship, which might tide over the period that must elapse before he should be of age to follow in his father's footsteps and take Holy Orders. And upon the very morning that brought tidings of the crash, there came also a definite offer of a post, with a salary so tempting that, under the circumstances, it could not be refused; even although the condition attached to it—that he must undertake not to leave his pupil until the boy of thirteen should have passed his seventeenth birthday—must have the effect of delaying Dick's own ordination.

The lad of whom he thus received the charge was extremely delicate, requiring constant change of air and scene, always away from England. Therefore their long companionship, now drawing to a close, had been spent by both pupil and tutor in almost incessant travelling, which had never once brought them within sight of home. And at the present moment, when Dick's long-desired return was actually approaching, there was much anticipation and counting of days in Denleigh vicarage.

'No letter this morning from him,' remarked Ena, standing, tall and slim, beside the already deserted breakfast table, and turning over the small pile of recently arrived correspondence.

'I daresay that Frank Roberts has taken him off on a fresh wildgoose chase to the other end of the world,' grumbled Bijou, of the long lashes, and—truth to tell—rather vain air. 'Dick isn't free for three weeks yet, remember, and that boy will have his pound of flesh!'

'What an unpleasant comparison,' remarked her father, who had just entered; 'and specially in regard to Frank Roberts, who really has been as good as gold to Dick.—Milly, my dear, apropos of gold, pray, where did you put that money that I left on my study table yesterday morning?—And, Ena, will you get out my thin overcoat? Really it is too warm for the thick one, now that May is in.'

'Shall I put away the other, dad?'

'No. I've hung it in my wardrobe, and let it stay there. I may use it once or twice at night even yet.—But about the money, Mildred?'

'I didn't see any, Charlie. I wish I had!' with just her old, merry laugh. 'How much and what was it for?—Don't look so bothered, old fellow.'

'But really I *am* bothered. It was too large a sum to lose, dear. Wakelin brought it yesterday for the pupil-teachers' salaries, and that I might get rid of the National Society's account. There was over twenty pounds. I must have left it on my table, when I was called away to baptise Mrs Brown's child. I paid Clarke on my way home, I remember.'

Mildred nodded. Clearly, she understood all about Clarke.

'When I returned, the other matter had escaped my memory completely. The money must have gone though, during my absence, or the sight of such a pile would have reminded me. I never thought of it again until I wanted to take it down to the schools, and then it had vanished. Only I made sure that you had it.'

'Not I!—But you've dropped it inside a drawer or somewhere. I'll come and help you to hunt.' With which she slipped her arm through his, and rubbing her head caressingly against his shoulder, looked up into his worried countenance with a smile. If any one could chase away gloominess from that face, where of late years clouds were apt sometimes to gather too quickly, it was certainly Mildred; just as surely as Charles was her consoler in those moments of weariness and depression which fall to the lot of high-spirited beings like herself.

'It will be in the middle drawer, at the top of everything. Now see if I am not right!' she told him cheerily.

But the prophecy unfortunately proved a false one. And even Mrs Russell began to look grave when, after emptying every familiar receptacle and customary hiding-place, she had to acknowledge that if her husband had, in a fit of abstraction, deposited the money in some safe corner, he must have taken remarkable pains in making a selection.

'I wouldn't care so much if Wakelin hadn't had a hand in it. But he is always so particularly unpleasant to deal with.'

'Not much worse than some of the rest,' responded Mrs Russell. For the south-country-bred folk had never grown accustomed to their north-country parishioners, with whom, on their side, neither of the pair were favourites. And the constant intercourse with the brusque, unrefined neighbours had neither blinded 't' passon' to Yorkshire failings nor altogether opened Yorkshire eyes to Hampshire virtues. Hence a state of constant friction, as unsatisfactory as it was irritating.

'Found it, mother?' came at that moment in Ena's bright voice, as she stood in the doorway. 'No? Then let us call Jane. She may have moved it.'

But Jane, a respectable, middle-aged woman of scrupulous honesty, which had stood the test of ten years in her present situation, professed herself as ignorant as the rest of the world. And gradually perplexity merged into anxiety.

'I must be off; my chicks will be waiting,' cried Ena at last. During eighteen months she had held the post of governess to the two young daughters of the same Mr Wakelin whom the vicar had just characterised as 'particularly unpleasant.' But, whatever the father's faults, Ena loved the children, and anticipated with genuine pleasure the hours spent each day in their instruction.

It was a large and important as well as perfectly new house, that towards which, five minutes later, she was hastening.

'None o' your old, nasty, pokey cribs for me,' Joseph Wakelin had declared, immediately after the lucky coup in iron which had brought him

his fortune. Whereupon he had set to work to build this red brick, imposing, comfortable, vulgar edifice, which he had then stuffed full of furniture, upholstered in startling colours, but affording the maximum of physical ease. Nowhere could sofas and couches be found of less artistic form, of cruder hue, or with more irreproachable springs and cushions than at 'The Hall,' the designation displayed in scrolls of iron-work above every gate.

It so happened that, quite out of the usual order of things, Ena that morning encountered the master of all this splendour upon his own doorstep.

'Late, ain't I?' he exclaimed, recognising her presence by a simple nod. But Ena was not so thin-skinned as Mildred. Possibly residence amongst these folk from childhood had blunted her perception of their peculiarities. 'Wasn't particular bright this morning, so I slept in. The changes in the weather don't suit me. It's like a furnace to-day, and so it was yesterday. How your father manages to walk about in that Inverness of his beats me!'

Ena laughed. The vicar's hatred of the cold was a constant source of wonder to his hardier flock.

'He's got his thinner coat to-day,' she retorted. 'Even he thought the other too heavy. I hope you'll be all right soon.'

'Thanks. By the way, if I go to the schools, shall I be likely to find his reverence? I rather fancy the walk there instead of going to the office,' with a guffaw at his own confession of idleness.

'I trust so, I'm sure. But when I started, all the house was upset searching for the pupil-teachers' salary money. You know the vicar's way of mislaying things; and money is no exception.' With which she passed on, never guessing at the suspicions already at work within her employer's brain.

'And that chap Clarke is bothering for his bill. What made Russell so bloomin' pressing to have cash instead of a cheque, as he always has had afore? I've fancied at whiles as pride would have a fall. Maybe it's tumbling now.' And though he did not add 'Hope as much!' it is quite probable that his sentiments ran in that direction. His resentment that the vicar would never admit him to the confidence and intimacy of an equal—for class-pride was certainly as great a failing upon the part of Charles Russell as was purse-pride upon that of Joseph Wakelin—had long ago influenced his mind against the man whose whole annual wealth would not have afforded him a week's income. To be able to despise the clergyman as he believed that he was despised—such was his pet though unacknowledged ambition. Almost he fancied that he saw his way to its fulfilment when, twenty-four hours later, he sat and talked over the strange occurrence of the vanished money with the vicar in his study.

'I can find the coin nowhere. Mrs Russell and I have searched the house from cellar to garret. If it had flown to the clouds it could not have disappeared more unaccountably,' exclaimed the clergyman, whose pallid face and red-rimmed eyes told of a sleepless night. 'I can't imagine what to do next in the matter.'

'Then you don't deny you had it from me?'

'Deny? What do you mean, sir?' firing up instantly. 'Of course I had it. Your insinuation—'

'Oh, blow my insinuation,' coarsely. 'What about burglars?'

Charles Russell drew himself up; but, though his voice was cold and his face hard, he still replied to the question. In truth, he understood already the false position in which this loss had placed him, and realised that his reputation demanded an answer to all inquiries, howsoever unpleasant.

'Very unlikely, though still possible. The window is not on the ground-floor. And any one entering from the hall during the daytime could scarcely fail to be observed. Though, as I have said, it is just possible that might have been managed.'

'And servants?'

'There is only Jane. All the parish is acquainted with her, and would vouch for her integrity. No! Whoever was the thief, it was not Jane.'

'He's a fool,' the other decided, listening and watching. 'Has he used it? At least he'd better try and throw the blame somewhere. But no! He'll save his conscience that far.' Then aloud, with a look of the utmost insolence: 'So the scamp is as usual "Mr Nobody, or the cat"—with a scoffing laugh that positively chilled the blood in his companion's veins. This man, with all his presumption, would never venture to behave with such freedom had not his vicar fallen very low in his estimation. So the clergyman believed, at any rate. But even now he was not prepared for what was to follow.

'Look here, Russell,' the other said, bending forward in his chair and speaking with a show of indulgent good-nature. 'I understand. I'm just as cocksure as you are that Clarke's bill was settled within an hour after I left this house! I'm out and out certain, too, that you haven't twenty pounds to repay—well, call it the loan! You make a friend of me, and I'll do my best for you. Come now. 'Tain't every man would, after as much.'

Nor, had the confidence been accorded, would he have betrayed the trust. Only to be recognised and acknowledged by the vicar as a benefactor was his sole desire. He had really no wish to lower the cleric in the eyes of the world, or to see pretty Ena's father—he was quite fond of Ena, he assured himself at this point—publicly dishonoured.

For a few seconds there was silence in the room, a silence which could be felt. Then, very slowly, and with a face of ashen whiteness, Charles Russell rose to his feet. 'Sir! Mr Wakelin!' he thundered. 'Do you dare to harbour such an opinion of me, and to tell me of it to my face? Go!' pointing to the door, 'go, and do your worst! But never cross my threshold again.—Go!' as the other, in pure astonishment at the outburst, remained motionless. 'Again I command you, go, lest I forget my office, and kick you out of the door!'

'Father, there's a gentleman named Daintry down-stairs in the drawing-room, who is very anxious— Oh, I beg your pardon! I thought you were alone,' were the words that interrupted this crisis, giving Mr Wakelin time to gather his

wits together, and falling like cooling drops upon the flame of the clergyman's ire. But it was the manufacturer who replied to Ena's announcement.

'He will be in a second! I'm off! And don't you suppose I'll ever bother you with another offer of help. Miss Russell, you needn't come to my house again. The missis can find some un better than a thief's daughter to teach my little gals. Good-morning to you.' With which parting shot he departed, stamping down the stairs in a fury, and slamming the hall door behind him; yet carrying away a conviction, which had been growing stronger during every moment of the interview, a conviction of Charles Russell's entire innocence. That it was a conviction which he intended neither to act upon nor admit, did not in the least prevent his recognition of its presence in his most unwilling mind.

'BARRA IN THE MINCH.'

'THE real Barra is in the Minch,' said the speaker sententiously; and then added, with emphasis, 'the real, rich, valuable Barra is under the sea; the rock they call Barra is only for the huts and the landing of the boats.'

While there is much truth in this, where a fleet of six or seven hundred splendid herring-boats fill Castle Bay with wealth and activity, yet there is another Barra above water of much interest. Although 'far amid the melancholy main,' with the solan geese from St Kilda flitting constantly about it, the island is by no means the miserable rock we are occasionally informed by those who have not made it a study, or who have only seen the herring-debris-covered rocks. The bay itself, formed by the island of Vatersay, lying opposite, is a splendid haven; and the old castle of the M'Neills on the islet off the pier gives a look of picturesque antiquity to the general view. Vatersay sands whiten and brighten the opposite shore of this great herring centre. The North Harbour is scarcely inferior to Castle Bay itself, and enables every portion of the waters surrounding, whether towards the Atlantic or the Minch, to be fished with safety. Although little over a thousand feet in height, the position of the island makes the view extensive and commanding; and during the herring-fishing season it is also a wonderfully busy and interesting scene that presents itself to the eye from the summit. The Laurentian rocks have been triturated by the constant gales rubbing the loose stones and particles violently together, until considerable humus has been formed in places; while the western shore is a magnificent stretch of the finest sand, that is ever shifting and lifting under the restless winds and waves. These sands were a constant source of danger to the adjoining arable land, where the western valley slopes to the sea, until a former factor succeeded in fixing the higher stretches by planting bent thereon. This has continued to extend, with its long siliceous roots that bind the shifty particles together, until a great extension of grazing land has succeeded.

Over this ground the botanist may ramble with amazement and delight, wondering how, even in the early spring, when Skye is black and dreary, these inner sands are rich in verdure and gay with flowers. This is the more surprising as the sands are mostly siliceous, with far less admixture of disintegrated shells than might have been anticipated. For the wild coast outside only permits the limpet to flourish, and even these are few in number, and must maintain a most precarious existence. But the mild air, moisture-laden from the south-west, however violent at times, is kindly in its result; and even amid the apparently barren rocks of Castle Bay, flowering plants are numerous throughout the year. One gentleman in July gathered somewhere about two hundred; whilst a party of students in a few hours' ramble round the island during August collected within twenty-five of the same number. Wherever any humus had gathered, these plants were numerous and varied. To this humus the sea has added to an important extent, more especially within the last generation. For the great herring and cod and ling fisheries mean a collection of debris sufficient to enrich a great extent of arable land if properly employed. But here we find a strange commingling of care and recklessness on the part of the inhabitants, who fight violently over every square yard of land, and yet throw into the sea the hundreds of tons of herring garbage that ought to be transferred from 'Barra in the Minch' to Barra that rears its head above it.

The people of Barra are a race of hardy seafarers, and are admirable boatmen, while they possess a very considerable stock of clever ponies among them. These ponies are considered the lineal descendants of the Spanish ponies of the Armada, and have always been famous trotters across the mile of sand of Cockle Bay which is their favourite raceground. The ponies, too, have done the work elsewhere allocated to the women in the Hebrides, and with their panniers have carried the peats from the higher moors to the clachans. The crupper spoils the look of the ponies for sale, unless caught at an early age; but the use of these animals has probably been beneficial to the women, saving them from exhausting hard work when very young. However this may be, the men of Barra do not compare in physique with those of Lewis, whose women undergo the burden and heat of the day to a greater extent.

In old days the food of the people is said to have largely consisted of cockles boiled in milk; but of late years a large business has been done in sending tons of cockles from the famous bay to the English markets. Great recklessness has as usual been shown in the depletion of these beds, whenever the prospect of gain stimulates the regardless use of what is common property. So long as they were only used for local consumption, they stood the strain for centuries; but when shipped without consideration in the wrong

season, and no care given to the beds, the result has been very injurious, and may remain so for a time.

In the old 'kitchen middens' of some extent in the west, shellfish are the prevalent remains, along with occasional fragments of the antlers of the deer. These could scarcely have belonged to this small island, and were probably the result of raids elsewhere by the turbulent McNeills, whose stronghold on an islet in the sea rather points to a race of seafarers. Indeed, whoever seeks to enjoy Barra must be almost amphibious. Peat grows plentifully on the western slopes, and assumes strange appearances where the swift streamlets from the heights undermine it in long subterranean passages, with occasional larger cuttings, as if underground dwellings were about.

The pasturage, as we have seen, is rich and varied, and a fine stock of Highland cattle browse on the north end of the island, which herd at one time belonged to a brother of the famous Macgillivray, whose classic descriptions of the haunts of the sea-fowl may have been largely gathered from these wild Hebridean shores.

Barra out of the Minch is indeed well deserving of closer study, while 'Barra in the Minch' has not yet been developed to its fullest possibilities. This quaint corner is an epitome of the old times and the new. The fish-pond alongside the old castle, with the garden near the shore opposite in a little dell, are indications of the mode of existence of the chief; while the huts of loose stones and turf, the thatch green with verdure, the oats and potatoes scrambling amongst the rocks, tell of the desperate struggle for existence of the old-time vassal. Then the old broch nodding at the Atlantic tells of a still prior ownership; while the McNeills' judgment-seat, with the place of execution just behind, recalls the rude prompt autocracy of the feudal times.

A short stroll leads to the less picturesque but more important modern conditions, where rival curers have erected wooden shanties, and piers, and curing-houses; and the air, and rocks, and water force on nose, and feet, and eyes the presence of King Herring. It brings into the island much money; it eliminates the old-world simplicity and purity of life. Although Roman Catholicism still controls the multitude, and the bottle of holy-water is hung on the bow of the boat, contact with the outer world has emancipated the minds of the people to a large extent. They still potter away over a few yards of oats or a patch of potato-land. They still spend too much time with their hands in their pockets. They still remain too often ashore when they might do well digging deep from 'Barra in the Minch.' But this time of transition will pass. They have become dissatisfied with their condition; this will lead to dissatisfaction with themselves, the first stimulus to future advance. The steamer of The Island Route has been gradually creating a new Barra, and a small town has already replaced the clachan of a dozen years ago. The failing fisheries will return, and 'Barra in the Minch' be gradually transferred to Barra that so boldly and gracefully dominates the western seas.

There is an admirable and well-managed modern hotel, built by Lady Gordon Cathcart, to develop the island; so that no inconvenience need be experienced by the ordinary visitor. A run

from Oban, therefore, can be readily made, and a dip taken, with little hardship on a summer day, into quaint old-world conditions far removed from the experience of the ordinary citizen.

MORE HOSPITAL STORIES.

POLICEMEN IN HOSPITAL.

By G. B. BURGIN.

POLICEMAN X 274 was inclined to be pessimistic, although convalescent. Whenever I could spare time from my other duties in the hospital, I would run into his ward and remind him that although he had been hard hit by a brick on the back of the head in a street row, life still had its compensations. There yet remained a little formality to be gone through on his complete recovery, when he was to be presented with a small cheque by the presiding magistrate of his district for having tackled Redheaded Mike single-handed, and utterly unmindful of the affectionate tokens of regard showered down on him in the shape of anything which came handy by the enthusiastic friends of that Hibernian swash-buckler. One of these tokens—namely, the brick—had smashed in his head; but the head of Policeman X 274 was very thick; so was his helmet; hence the brick had only incapacitated the worthy policeman from duty for some two months, and not 'kilt him entoirely.' Still, Policeman X 274 remained pessimistic. He said that the brick had not only upset him, but his theories as well, and that he now felt it his duty to become an ardent Conservative. This was after I had enlarged on the practical part of Socialism to be met with in London slums. Policeman X 274 raised himself up in bed, and waving an imaginary truncheon, delivered himself thus:

'You'll excuse me, ma'am, for contradicting my betters; but Socialism's mostly talk. So is all other "Isms," if you looks into 'em on your beat of rainy nights, when you've got time to think things out. Folks preaches Socialism and travels first-class. When a man here and there acts up to it, he's mostly queer in his head, and we generally runs him in. They all talks of going shares, these Socialists; but it's mostly other men's property they wants to divide. In the "force," we most of us sticks to our own shirts and handkerchiefs—when we've got any. There was a young Doctor I knew, ma'am—used to see him on my beat frequent—who'd talk to anybody, and give away his clothes ever so free. This young Doctor used to attend Socialist meetings when he was off duty, and the other Sawbones would chaff him because he hadn't time for nothing else. The hall where these meetings was held was on my beat, and sometimes people would be a bit thirsty.

'Socialists in the back streets, having nothing to lose, is apt to pick up odds and ends permissious-like sometimes, and somebody's got to be run in. This young Doctor kept on spouting at the meetings till the other doctors got sick of equality and the rights of man. Everything down was to go up, and everything up was to go down.

'Well, one night, there was a man knocked

down, and me and a mate took him to the hospital. Just as we was standing in the entrance, the young Doctor came running up very excited like. "Officer," he says, "come in here and arrest 'em all. They've stolen everything they could lay their hands on." So I goes up to his room, and there was nothing in it but a carpet. Curtains, pictures, furniture, were all gone. Then he takes me to one room with a gray-haired surgeon sitting in an armchair and wearing a smoking-cap. "Officer, do your dooty," he says. "That's my chair and cap, and he's got my best trousers on." Then he takes me to another. "Officer, this fellow's stolen my table, and bed, and washstand."—"Don't be an idiot," says this man, quietly smoking. "In the first place, you've got to prove it's your bed; in the second place, you've no more right to this bed than I have: each man is as good as any other man; and when a man hasn't got a bed, the best thing he can do is to take some one else's and stick to it—if he can." And so they all went on, till he began to see I couldn't take up the whole hospital staff, and promised to give up Socialism if they'd return his things, which they did, and stood him such a supper afterwards, he couldn't tell who'd got his trousers and who wore his cap.'

After Policeman X 274 got well, his chief idea was to testify his gratitude to me by bringing 'cases' whenever there was a chance. One evening he came to the hospital with a small but mischievous-looking boy. 'Do you know this youngster, nurse?' he asked.

'No.'

Policeman X 274 was disappointed. 'I thought you knew everything, ma'am. This youngster can't tell his name, but said something about a hospital. Just come from the seaside. Put in charge of an old lady at Brighton. Old lady very deaf. Told us to take him to the hospital: she didn't want him. He'd pulled all the feathers out of her parrot. If you could have seen that parrot, you'd have believed it. He was as naked as original sin, ma'am, and twice as ugly.'

Policeman X 274 departed; but the doctor in charge objected to giving the child a bed for the night. The child, however, was evidently used to hospitals, and proceeded to make himself comfortable. The next morning, his anxious parents appeared on the scene, as well as the old lady, the latter explaining that it was the parrot she had wanted taken to a hospital, but that the stupid policeman had gone off with the child, and left her precious bird in a state of nudity. Fortunately, it was warm weather, and she hoped her dear parrot would get over his scandalous treatment. I rubbed a little vaseline on the bird's ungainly person, and she went away contented.

Policeman X 274 wiped his perspiring brow when the old lady had departed, parrot and all, and accepted a *douceur* from the boy's grateful parents with an ease evidently the result of long practice.

'That's what comes of trying to do your dooty, ma'am,' he said. 'It's usually the tother way round, though. All the women are very kind, and it's the men don't like us. The old ladies from the country always calls us "officer"'

or "sergeant," and though you know they're "kidding" you, it's pleasant, all the same. But men are always pleased when a bobby comes to grief. I was trying to get into a 'bus once, and slipped. I daren't let go of the handrail, and was dragged along on my stumnick half-way down Cheapside. The conductor was up on top and didn't see me, and no one inside tried to stop the 'bus 'cept a sweet old lady who asked her husband to interfere. He looked out. "Oh, it's only a bobby," he says, without lifting his hand; "and there's plenty more of 'em where he comes from. They're always dragging other people through the dirt. Now, it's his turn." Americans are very different. One old lady tried to get me to go to New York to take care of her, and said she wished the police would emigrate there, 'stead of the Irish.'

But the duties of the London police are not confined to looking after the welfare of old ladies. When an unfortunate man has attempted to commit suicide, he is generally taken into a hospital by policemen, one of whom accompanies him to the ward and remains there until he is relieved by another member of the force in plain clothes. From that moment up to the day of the patient's departure, a policeman is in constant charge. If a man has tried to kill himself by jumping through a window, he is often picked up with a broken leg, sometimes two. When he is settled in bed, he is comparatively safe; at any rate, there is no fear of his getting up; but he has to be watched always. Patients who have attempted to commit suicide are kept under observation, even if they may appear to be thoroughly sorry for what they have done. A man who has cut his throat might do himself harm by meddling with the bandages, although in cases of this kind they are specially planned to reduce the risk of interference. X 274 once brought in a pretty young girl who had jumped out of a window and broken one thigh. She puzzled me at first, with her low sweet voice and beautiful Irish eyes. All who saw her felt that the tragic side of life was before them, and that this poor girl had been cruelly treated by

Fate, Fortune, Chance, whose kindness,
Hostility, or blindness,
Plays such strange freaks with human destinies.

It transpired, however, her temper was very bad, and that after a few words with her husband about 'another lady,' she had thrown herself out of the window 'to spite him.' He came to the hospital and assured her that she had no reason to be jealous at all, and evidently thought there was nothing unusual in the step, or jump, rather, which she had taken to prove her superiority to other wives.

Sometimes X 274 would bring to the hospital elderly people who had made very feeble attempts to do themselves bodily harm. They settled down so comfortably in the ward, and were so glad to get there, that the presence of a policeman seemed a farce. They had no intention whatever of making any further attempts on their lives, because the first one had given them all they wanted: they were in the required haven, with every intention of making a very gradual recovery. Then the policeman on duty would—especially if it were X 274—prove an

acquisition to the whole ward, and lend a hand at any job which did not take him too far from his charge's bed. Generally, he and his charge would play draughts or dominoes, and discuss Home Rule in the intervals between games. As a rule, a member of the force is a more desirable caretaker than an ordinary male attendant who thinks—as one of them told me—that 'minding deleterious patients [I think he meant 'delirious'] is an easy way of earning a living.'

Policeman X 274 when on duty in the ward suffered much mental anguish from the different views taken of his interesting charges by casual visitors. 'Dear me,' said one elderly spinster, 'do you mean to say that man actually tried to cut his throat?—How very interesting!' Then she turned to her companion: 'Tried to cut his throat, my dear!—Would you mind asking him, officer, if he did it with a razor or a kitchen knife?' In this instance the 'patient' had some sense of humour. Raising himself on one elbow, he beckoned the visitor to approach. 'I allers does it with a chopper,' he said with a ghastly chuckle. 'You wait till I git out, and if you likes to come down our Court, I'll show yer.'

Very poor people, as a rule, who had 'a friend or brother there,' as the poet puts it, were not much shocked by the awful nature of such a deed as attempted self-murder. They would often discuss the pros and cons with X 274 quite dispassionately, and seldom asked when his 'patient' would be discharged. In the first place, they usually did not want him back; and in the second, they knew that there was a little indispensable formality before a magistrate which might necessitate a certain period of imprisonment ere the 'patient' was allowed to return home again.

I soon got on very friendly terms indeed with X 274. He brought in accidents, called for reports, carried wounded children to me, or discovered their friends in a manner which was simply marvellous. I had only to tell X 274 I wanted the relations of a wounded child; and he would shortly return with a whole crowd of people, who invariably told me that 'the gentleman said you wanted us, ma'am, and that if we didn't come at onces, begorra, he'd make us.'

'Yes, ma'am; I finds "workus ladies" very trying, poor old bodies,' X 274 one day admitted in response to a question of mine. 'There was one old lady who got to know me so well, I hadn't the heart to spoil her enjoyment. "Now, you dear good man," she used to say to me, "I've had sixpence subscribed by a few kind friends for a little liquid refreshment. Here is twopenny (she never said "tuppence," like most people. She'd been a real lady, she had—kept a school once) for you in case the—the sun gets to my head, when I shall expect you to have the goodness to escort me to Lockhart's Cocoa Rooms, and to call for me after I have had a slight nap."—The "sun" got to her head reg'lar, ma'am, and I'd take her to the cocoa place, and make her comfortable in a corner, and fetch her some tea when it got out again. They knew her ways at "The House," and never got uneasy about her. When I was off duty, I'd slip into plain clothes, offer her my arm, and take the old lady back again in style. "Policeman, I thank you for your

courtesy," she'd say to me, with a little old-fashioned bow. "You have a feeling heart, and I hope you will one day become an Inspector." Then the poor old body would toddle in and go to bed quite happy. One day, "the Duchess" (that's what they called her) didn't come. She'd asked 'em to give her little old Bible to "that dear, good, patient policeman, with her love;" and then she died. I changed my beat after that. I couldn't stand it when her reg'lar day out came round and she didn't turn up.

'Now, factory girls is different,' continued X 274 meditatively. 'I was going over Waterloo Bridge one day, and my helmet come off in the rain and wind. I ran after it. "Don't kick it, sir; please, don't kick it," said a voice. I stopped to see what was the matter, and the helmet rolled under a wagon wheel and was squashed. "Got yer that time, sergeant," said the voice. It was one of them cheeky factory girls, ma'am, and she'd done it on purpose, to get my helmet squashed.'

'It's anxious work being on a City beat,' reminiscently continued X 274. 'You get to know a lot about other folks' business too. It's amazin' what old ladies will do. Why, I've had one stand in the middle of a crossing and explain she'd just been to the Bank. Then she'd put her hand up to her chest in an anxious sort of way, so as any thief within a mile could see where she'd shoved her money. I've actually seen old ladies from the country stand just inside a Bank and put their money into their under-pockets or the bosom of their gowns. They'll do the same thing coming out of stockbrokers' offices, and then be surprised they're robbed. I often wonder any of 'em gets home safe, though some country folks in town are mighty suspicious. The young men who come up on 'scursions hides their watches in their trousers pockets and forgets to tuck in the chain. It's wonderful work being on a beat nigh Exeter Hall, too, when the May Meetings is on. A rum lot of people comes to those meetings, and they're mostly main pleased with themselves. Noah's Ark isn't in it when it comes to some of the clothes the old uns wear. The young uns mostly gets new boots to come to town in, and tries to seem as if they didn't hurt; but you see 'em looking in all the windows, and standing on one leg to ease the other foot.'

'The old Quaker ladies as come to town for their meetings is very different, and mostly smells of lavender all over. There was one old lady I remember at Charing Cross once. She'd got into the wrong 'bus, and the conductor handed her over to me to look after. She was just like a bit of old china or a wax image, and had white ribbons to her bonnet, and a bit of white stuff round her throat to match her snow-white hair. She must have been about eighty. When I took her across the street and put her in the right 'bus, she stretched out her little bit of a hand and shook my big un quite heartily, and says: "Friend, I am much obliged to thee. When thou art eighty, I hope the dear Lord will raise up as good a friend for thee. Lord bless thee." But they ain't all like her.'

The next time I saw Policeman X 274 he was brought in on a stretcher, after having stopped a pair of runaway horses. I insisted that I should

nurse him. During his delirium, I found out that at one period of his career he must have been a coachman. He'd sit up in bed quietly enough and then begin to pull off his quilt and fold it up tidily, saying he shouldn't want a rug, and would have it on the driving-box. Then he'd talk to the horses, as if he could see them, or begin to fold up his blanket just like the counterpane. When he started on the sheet, I would go quietly up to him and say: 'I think it's going to rain to-day; I wouldn't fold up the rug if I were you. Just keep it across your knees. Then you'll be all right.' He would answer me quite sensibly: 'Very well; that's all right. A shower'll lay the dust.' Now, he's pulling round a little, and will be taken off to the country as soon as he's able to move. There are rumours of promotion and another presentation when he comes back. He deserves both.

IS AN ICE AGE PERIODIC?

THERE was a period in the distant past, we are told, when the climate over the northern hemisphere, above the fortieth parallel of latitude, was far more genial and equable than it is at present. During many consecutive ages this vast region enjoyed an alternation of long mild summers and short mild winters. In the vicinity of the Pole the earth was free from the incubus of the desolating ice-sheet, for even the circumscribed area of glaciation coeval with the period of human history had no existence.

A climatic condition so beneficent is delightful to contemplate. The more inviting does it appear in recollection of recent wayward tendencies of the British weather, such as sharp and protracted winters, ungenial summers, and generally mixed and uncertain seasons. Then the pleasure of confident belief that Boreas, the blustering terror of the year, was deposed, and his throne dissolved for several thousand years; that no more could the tyrant vent his fitful moods in icy blasts that skirmish into the heart of spring, and even chill the breath of summer. No creeping glacier or crushing icefloe would paralyse the efforts of Arctic adventure. The Pole itself, and the North-west Passage, once the goals of heroic endeavour, would be accessible to the ubiquitous tourist, whose course would lie along pleasant waterways, and in sight of shores clothed in the luxuriant verdure of almost perennial summer.

But disastrously for such fanciful speculation there is the dual nature of the cosmos to be reckoned with. The universal law of compensation balances one extreme of vicissitude by imposing another of a precisely opposite character. The genial period would be merely an oscillation—a swing in one direction of the terrestrial pendulum. The long period of warmth and luxuriance must be preceded, or followed, by that calamitous agency an Ice Age of equal duration.

At such time the heat energy of the then short fierce summer is ineffectual to dissipate the cumulative effects of the long cold winters. Immense glaciers would be formed—glaciation would gradually spread southwards from the Pole until a considerable portion of the northern hemisphere,

including the greater part of Britain, was buried beneath an ice-sheet one thousand feet or more in thickness. The natural features of the land would be torn and scarred, the population driven out or destroyed, and the puny works of man ground and pulverised into effacement by the enormous abrading and crushing force of the moving masses of ice.

A vast interval of time has elapsed since the end of what is known as the Great Ice Age. The tracks of the glaciers are plainly visible. The glacial deposits, clay, moraines, and boulders, are abundant and distinct. But the testimony of the rocks is imperfect as regards a correct approximation of the period when that stupendous phenomenon prevailed; and absolutely void of evidence respecting its recurrence in the future. So vast and incomprehensible are the intervals of time involved in these cyclic changes, that such a tremendous agency might well be thought peculiar to a long past geological epoch. An ice age has therefore been regarded as an evolutionary phase of the distant past impossible to recur. So far from having only an archaeological interest, ice ages are not without significance for the future of the human race, however remote. The agencies that produce them are still operative. An ice age will assumably occur when the earth's orbital situation again favours glacial development.

It is probable that from time to time certain stages in the earth's perturbation may transiently influence climate in a minor degree. A series of cold winters and cheerless summers, for example, may find an explanation in planetary influence. Indeed, Sir Robert Ball refers to these cold winters as premonitory of the dread climatic vicissitude, an ice age, which he maintains is destined to recur within a measurable, though distant, period.

A distinction must be held between weather periodicity and the gigantic cycle of climatic change. Sun-spots, for instance, influence the weather from year to year. But their influence is fleeting, and well within the limit of normal climatic range. The great sun-spot of February 13, 1892, indicated a maximum of solar activity. Resultant maxima in certain terrestrial phenomena were evidenced by unusual magnetic perturbations, remarkable auroral displays, terrible inundations and tornadoes in America, and a disastrous hurricane in Mauritius. It was suggested that a sun-spot of such unusual magnitude and grandeur, by affecting solar radiation, might have caused the sudden fall in temperature which followed its passage across the solar disc. Sun-spots, however, do not so affect solar radiation. Probably the true cause of thermal fluctuation at such times is atmospheric disturbance by the magnetic property of the solar heat-rays.

From century to century the relative position of the earth in the plane of its orbit is, within certain limits, never precisely the same. The form of the earth's orbit and the direction of the earth's axis are constantly changing. These two perturbations constitute two distinct cycles of change, differing vastly in the time of their completion. Their progressive motion is exceedingly slow. The utmost limit of orbital eccentricity is only attained in a gigantic period of time. But during the waxing and waning of the orbit there are many revolutions of the line

of equinoxes, caused by the polar rotation of the earth, each rotation occupying a net period of twenty-one thousand years. There are also slight and temporary aberrations of the earth from its true orbital path. These may exercise some passing meteorological effect; but they have no bearing whatever upon climatic change.

The planets of our system are tugging at each other with prodigious might; so great is the energy of planetary attraction, that when expressed in tons it surpasses comprehension. One result of these disturbing forces is to alter the earth's nearly circular orbit into an elliptical course, which as gradually changes back again into the circular. The utmost attainable eccentricity of the orbit would by itself appear to be too unimportant to cause extensive glaciation. The orbital form must therefore be associated with the polar rotation. This is a kind of swaying motion of the Pole about the axis, something similar to that of a spinning-top when about to fall. The Pole describes a circle in the heavens, causing an apparent revolution in a contrary direction of the twelve constellations in the ecliptic known as the signs of the zodiac. As the earth sweeps along in its majestic course, a consequent small annual change in the direction of its axis brings the point where the equator intersects the ecliptic a trifle farther to the eastward of the position of the preceding year. An apparent retrograde motion of the ecliptic results, which is known as the precession of the equinoxes. A complete revolution of the line of equinoxes occupies a net period of twenty-one thousand years.

It is therefore not the eccentricity of the orbit alone, nor the polar rotation alone, that can produce an ice age or a genial age, but a certain obliquity of the orbit, which is the combined and net result of both the perturbations. The effect of the earth's position at the period of greatest orbital eccentricity is to dispropotion the length of the seasons, and the mean daily sun-heat, in either hemisphere, and thereby to induce two opposite climatic extremes, glaciation in one hemisphere co-existent with interglaciation in the other hemisphere. An ice age, say, in the northern hemisphere, and a genial age in the southern hemisphere for a period of ten thousand five hundred years. Then, as the Pole swings round half a circle, and inclines the earth's axis in an opposite direction, the southern hemisphere becomes glaciated, and the northern hemisphere genial, for a like period. So slow are the terrestrial motions which contribute to these phenomena, and so vast a period must consequently elapse before the earth can extricate itself from its extreme position, that two or more ice ages may alternately occur in either hemisphere.

The astronomical theory of climatic change is attractively set forth in Sir Robert Ball's admirable little treatise on the subject. While properly disclaiming any particular novelty for the facts and inferences, the theory is therein discussed in the modest and unpretentious spirit of true scientific research; and the argument is conveyed in such familiar terms, that any lay reader possessing a rudimentary knowledge of planetary motion can readily grasp and assimilate the conclusions.

At first sight it is difficult to realise the ade-

quacy of the greatest attainable obliquity of the earth's orbit combined with the polar rotation to produce the extraordinary thermal changes claimed as a consequence. With reference to this difficulty, Sir Robert Ball emphasises two essential elements in the astronomical theory. Misconception of them has hitherto vitiated deduction from planetary perturbation: one of those elements is the comparatively small diminution of solar heat necessary to set up glaciation; the other is the true proportion of summer and winter sun-heat received by either hemisphere.

In estimating the thermal changes requisite to induce extensive glaciation, it would be entirely wrong to reckon the heat given out by the sun according to the average measure of summer and winter heat upon the earth. Suppose these to be respectively sixty degrees and thirty degrees; the proper zero to reckon from will be the temperature of space, which, at a very moderate estimate, will be three hundred degrees below the zero of Fahrenheit. Therefore, the entire heat given out by the sun, reckoned from the temperature of space, will be respectively three hundred and sixty degrees and three hundred and thirty degrees. Consequently, a reduction of the earth's summer or winter heat to the zero of Fahrenheit would constitute a loss of only one-twelfth or one-eleventh of the entire heat given out by the sun.

Then as regards the due proportion of sun-heat. The heat-measure received by the whole earth must be considered as a constant quantity, every year alike. But the vital point in this connection is that the yearly heat-measure received in either hemisphere is unequally distributed over the year, in a fixed and unchangeable proportion. Suppose the yearly heat-measure in either hemisphere be denoted by the number 100; then the proportion of summer heat will be 63, and of winter heat 37—no matter what may be the value of the yearly heat-measure received by the whole earth, no matter what degree of eccentricity the earth's orbit may have attained. At all times, and in every aspect of perturbation, the proportions in either hemisphere will be 63 and 37.

At the present time, in the northern hemisphere the sun is above the equator one hundred and eighty-six days of the year—that is to say, the summer in the northern hemisphere is now seven days longer than the summer in the southern hemisphere. Were the earth's orbit to permanently retain its present form, this difference of seven days in the seasons of the two hemispheres, being about the relative maximum, would continue to alternate between the two hemispheres in accordance with the direction of the earth's axis.

But when, in the lapse of ages, the earth's orbit reaches its greatest eccentricity, the difference in the length of the seasons in the two hemispheres will amount to thirty-three days. One hemisphere will then enjoy a long spring-like summer of 199 days with 229 heat-measures, and a short mild winter of 166 days with 136 heat-measures. The climatic conditions of the other hemisphere will be exactly the reverse of these. During the same period it will experience a short, fierce summer of 166 days with 229 heat-

measures, and a long rigorous winter over which will be spread only 136 mean daily heat-measures. The climate in the one hemisphere will be genial; that in the other hemisphere will be glacial. Notwithstanding the greater heat of the glacial summer, the earth passing much more rapidly through its perihelion, and the season being so much shorter, the fervid sun-heat will be inadequate to dissipate the accumulating deposits of the long cold winter. Great glaciers will form, and the desolating ice-sheet will spread itself over a vast area—a stupendous agency of destruction and calamity.

The astronomical theory of an ice age advances not one step beyond a simple thesis based upon demonstrable results of scientific research. The precise extent of planetary attraction, and its effect in periodically dragging the earth into an elliptical path, are familiar enough to the astronomer; and the resultant thermal changes are assumably calculable. The main purpose of the theory is to approximate the periods of these great climatic vicissitudes which the testimony of the rocks, however full and conclusive in other respects, is too imperfect to reveal. Thus the astronomer, with his unassailable evidence, comes to the aid of the geologist. In the astronomical theory he exhibits a potent agency in the cosmical evolution, and supplies a unit and a measure to hitherto indeterminate periods of geological time.

An ice age, as Sir Robert Ball reminds us, is not catastrophic. There is no sudden transition from smiling luxuriance to bitter desolation. The development of this stupendous phenomenon is as gradual as the planetary configuration that brings it forth. Very many generations of men will flourish and pass away before even the initial stage of another ice age is reached. Whether the next ice age will be as severe and overwhelming as that which has left its indelible traces upon the face of nature, or whether its intensity will be modified by the altered condition of the earth, is a question more properly in the domain of the physiographer.

MEMORIES.

A SONG.

O LOVE, since we two bade good-bye,
The regal roses' rich perfume
But calls the wild tears to my eyes,
And brings me dreams of pain and gloom.
'Twas 'mong the roses, O Sweetheart,
That all our farewell words were said;
Each summer from their graves they rise;
But you to me are dead, are dead.

The dearest treasure that I hold
Is just one rose your lips did kiss;
His golden store no miser hoards
Nor prizes more than I do this;
Yet bitter are the tears mine eyes
Upon its withered petals shed;
Poor ghost of glory once mine own,
Like it, your love is dead, is dead.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

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EGYPT FIVE THOUSAND YEARS AGO.

THE Archaeological Survey of Egypt undertaken by the Egyptian Exploration Fund is proceeding under favourable auspices, and the results of each year's discoveries seem of increasing interest. Last year, several artists were sent out to make fac-simile drawings of the wall-paintings in tombs belonging to the eleventh and twelfth dynasties—that is, of a period about two to three thousand years B.C., or approximately five thousand years ago. These drawings, supplemented by portions of the original wall of a tomb which had been shattered by an earthquake, rendering the removal possible without any destruction on the part of the explorers, have recently been exhibited at the residence of the Marquis of Bute, and present many special points of interest. The freshness and beauty of the pigments employed in these very ancient frescoes are most remarkable. We are accustomed to look with wonder at the works of what we call the 'old masters,' and to think the colouring of Orcagna, Cimabue, and Giotto marvellous after the lapse of five or six centuries; but here we get colours which have stood the test of ten times that period, and yet retain their freshness and beauty almost unimpaired, so that you may trace the delicate gradations in the plumage of a bird, and thus classify numerous varieties of ducks, evidently domesticated and carefully bred; and even in the hieroglyphics the birds are so carefully portrayed that the species designed is easily recognisable. Three species of domesticated dogs appear with characteristics resembling those of to-day. There is a great lean-bodied, long-legged creature which might be the ancestor of our greyhound; but the legs are much thicker, and it is altogether more clumsy and less graceful. Then there is a dog possessing the characteristics of the boarhound, but with a mottled coat somewhat resembling that of a tortoiseshell cat. This colouring is also observable in the third species of dog, which has a strong affinity with the modern spitz or 'dachshund,' having a long body

and short bandy legs; but the latter characteristic is not so decidedly marked as at the present day. This little dog would seem to have been a favourite with the Egyptians at that remote period, for two of the kind are depicted, a male and female, one accompanying a lady in a close palanquin. It may here be remarked that a dog very closely resembling the one here portrayed is still found in South Africa, where it is bred and highly esteemed by the Hottentots, who even make the women nurse the puppies with their own children. This dog, known as a 'brach-hond,' is long-bodied and short-legged, but not so bandy-legged as the dachshund; the colouring also is more like that of the ancient Egyptian dog, being mottled, and often spotted with red like a cow.

There is also a cat, large and gaunt and fierce, certainly not our domestic tabby, but something approaching to the wild-cat. Whether this was the variety dedicated to Pasht, and of which so many mummies are found, can hardly be determined by the painting; but probably it was intended to represent that sacred animal.

The types of mankind shown on these very early paintings are of peculiar interest. There is the swarthy Egyptian ploughman, holding the primitive wooden plough, not, however, of the earliest type, which was only a crooked pointed stick driven by hand, whereas this is drawn by an ox, and has a cross-handle, painted red. Then there are the bearers of the palanquin, two of whom appear to be shaven, as was the manner of the Egyptians; whilst a third wears a full crop of hair or a wig, probably to denote superior rank. In another painting, rank is shown by the leopard-skin robe, worn apparently by an overseer, who is directing two workmen; and it may be remarked that even to the present day the leopard skin denotes the priestly caste, medicine-man, or chieftainship, in all parts of Africa.

Perhaps the most interesting of the human figures depicted is a group, or rather procession, of red-haired, light-skinned, blue-eyed people, supposed to be Lybians, the men bearing in their

hands crooked clubs resembling boomerangs, and having other weapons, notably a huge knife, thrust through their shaggy red hair; whilst the women carry their children in baskets on their backs; and two are depicted bearing monkeys instead of children. Conventionally, the Egyptian women are always represented as much lighter in colour than the men, and two groups in these paintings are especially remarkable. In one, two women are represented standing facing each other, one foot raised, touching that of the adversary, one hand being also placed on that of the other, whilst a round object, supposed to be a bladder, is attached by a long string to the hair of each at the back, hanging down to the shoulders. This is evidently a game, in which the performers whirl round and strike each other with the ball or bladder attached to the hair; and it is easy to see that, if the ball were not very light, the game might be an exceedingly rough one. In the other group, two women tossing balls are seated on the backs of two other women, the supposition being that when they fail to catch, they in turn become horses for the others. These two games of ball strike one as new, and especially noteworthy from the performers being women. The great peculiarity in all these human figures is the extraordinary length of the fingers and toes. In those days, it was evidently a mark of beauty to have a long foot and hand, and the artists must have complimented their subjects by exaggeration in these points.

Here, too, we may see the mode of making fire in the twenty-fifth century B.C., for we see a man represented using a fire-drill such as is still in use among some uncivilised races, which consists of a thong or bowstring twisted round a pointed stick, inserted in a very dry board, the thong being pulled rapidly backwards and forwards until fire is produced by friction. This is of course an advance upon the earlier practice of rubbing two sticks together, which is the custom among very primitive savages, and upon the drill twirled in the hand, which is also still in use.

The figures and hieroglyphs of these tombs, which are situated in the rocky ground on the east bank of the Nile, in the provinces of Minieh and Assiut, in Upper Egypt, differ from the generality of Egyptian hieroglyphs, which are usually incised in the granite, whereas, in these the figures having been first traced on the stone, the interspaces were then chipped away, leaving the design in relief, these raised figures being afterwards very carefully and beautifully painted. The Arabs have taken advantage of this raised-work, and have diligently chipped away the figures from all the fragments which have fallen into their hands, either out of pure love of destruction, or more probably in order to sell the painted hieroglyphs thus detached as amulets. This shows the necessity for completing the Survey as soon as possible, in order to preserve these precious relics of hoar antiquity from the hands of the modern spoiler, for the value of these paintings and hieroglyphs in illustrating the history of the world cannot be over-estimated. In them we see life as it existed in the most civilised country of the world three thousand years and more before the birth of Christ; the manners and customs, dress, and even the amuse-

ments of this remote time are here revealed to us. We can trace their commerce with distant lands, their modes of navigation and agriculture, their method of trapping birds, as well as the game they hunted and the water-fowl they domesticated, all so faithfully delineated as to be unimpeachable witnesses of the truth of ancient historical records; whilst the inscriptions enlighten us as to the names and exploits of their rulers, probably with some exaggerations and embellishments, yet on the whole trustworthy as to matters of fact, and incidentally throwing light upon much that is obscure in the writings of ancient historians, both biblical and secular.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XXII.

Night brings us stars, as sorrow shows us truths:
Though many, yet they help not; bright, they light not;
They are too late to serve us; and sad things
Are aye too true. We never see the stars
Till we can see nought but them. So with truth.
BAILEY.

'SAGE.'

No answer.

'Sage!' again, louder.

Still no answer.

'Sage, are you asleep?' with some irritation, for though that week at Scar had done wonders for Kitty, and she was beginning in many respects to shake off invalid ways, she had been so used for the last three months to have immediate attention paid to her slightest word, that this extraordinary silence on Sage's part was not to be endured patiently.

Owen Ludlow was occupied that August with a larger and more careful study of Scar Head than he had ever attempted before, from his favourite point of view for observing the sunset effects, from the rocks a little way along the shore beyond Scar. And here, day after day, his easel was set; and hard by, in a nook among the rocks, a comfortable resting-place for Kitty was contrived where a high rock cast a shade even at mid-day; and cushions and rugs accommodated themselves to an easily tired back; while, if she stretched out a hand, already a little bit less white and limp than when she came, she could lay it on cool brown seaweed, over which the sea washed at high-tide, and could pop the little knobs when she had sufficient energy.

Owen Ludlow was not at hand when Kitty spoke, though his easel and canvas still stood there. He had gone back to see if there were any letters by the second post, and had found a perplexing one for himself, which, however, had not prevented him from bringing down one for Sage directed in Maurice's hand, a letter which he knew had been anxiously expected all the week. He came and dropped it over her shoulder into her lap as she sat on the rocks, and then he walked on along the shore towards the point, pondering his own letter, with only one glance round at her radiant face as she held her lover's letter, examining the direction and postmark with a sort of childish pleasure in prolonging the infinite delight of opening it.

Kitty's voice sounded to Sage as if it were a long way off; but the last words seemed to take

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hold of her senses, which were a little numbed and confused, with a sudden shock. Both be drowned? Well, that would be an end of a lot of trouble. It really would be difficult to get Kitty up that steep bit of beach all by herself; and the tide had a way of creeping in and turning those large stones into islands, and deepening and spreading, and then rising and covering one point after another, till there was nothing but smooth water, with the quiet moonlight over it. It would be a very easy way out of life's perplexities, and she would not be leaving Kitty. She had promised mother to care for little Kit, and she would not like to leave her so weak and ill. But if they were both drowned, they would be together, and mother would not need to say, 'Where's Kitty?' when they met.

She did not really mean it, of course. If such an impossible thing had happened as that they should have been surrounded by the sea, and Owen Ludlow should have forgotten them, and the dozens of kind hearts almost within hail in the village above been unconscious of their peril, depend upon it Sage would have fought desperately for her own life and for Kitty's. You know when people have had a sharp blow on the head, they are a little bit stupefied just at first; and it is the same when the heart is struck—the senses are dulled and blunted.

'Look ye here, Missy; shall I carry the little maid up the hill? She don't look fit-like to carry herself, and the clouds be coming up thick over you, and maybe we'll get some rain.'

It was Ben Caster who spoke, and he must have been close by while Sage was resigning herself and Kitty to a watery grave. And before they were half-way up the beach, Mr Ludlow overtook them, and relieved Sage of the burden of shawls and cushions with which she was laden, declaring that he would go back and fetch the rest after tea, as the tide would not be up there for a couple of hours.

On that former occasion, not yet a year ago, when trouble had befallen Sage at Scar, she was allowed the luxury of solitude and quiet in which to recover her bearings and face the future. She had no need then to speak of what she felt, still less to pretend to feel other than she did, and to swear that black was white, and cruel wrong right, and that she entirely agreed and was content with the new turn events had taken. Now she must collect her forces and arrange her line of defence with the smallest delay possible, for at any moment Ludlow, knowing whose letter he had dropped into her lap, might ask the natural question, 'Well, when is he coming?'

And then she would have to say that Maurice was not coming; that he would never come again; and, moreover, that it was quite right he should not come; and that she entirely agreed with all he said, and with the wisdom of ending the engagement between them. And then she would have to take up the cudgels for Maurice, even against herself, for she knew that Ludlow would be very angry, and would not pick his words in speaking of Maurice's behaviour; and she would not listen to that; and so, perhaps, she would lose her friend as well as her lover.

She might really have put off the dreaded explanation till the next day, for Kitty was tired

and exacting, and Ludlow went off after tea, and did not return till after Kitty was in bed, and when Sage might quite reasonably have gone to bed too, as Mrs Stock pressed her to do, being also struck by the girl's sad look.

'Twere just how my poor, dear husband looked before he had his first fit; and I says to him, "Job," says I, "whatever is the matter with you?" And he looked kinder skeered like, and asked for a drink of water—being a teetotaler, and that strick as he wouldn't touch a drop of brandy, not if it were ever so; but seeing as you ain't that way, leastways, not pledged to it, I'd recommend just a leetle drop, as I takes it myself nows and thens when I gets the spasms, though not one as approves of leetle drops took promiscuous.'

But Sage declined Mrs Stock's offer, and begged her not to sit up any longer. So Mrs Stock went creaking up to bed; and Sage was left just for a few minutes quite alone in the quiet studio, with the great white moon looking in at her, cruelly recalling that moonlight night when her poor, little love-story had begun.

She went out into the great moonlit stillness, on which the soft murmur of the sea below gently fell; and just for a moment she let her poor, little, forlorn self go, and cast herself down in the dewy grass under the old apple-tree, with her arms round the mossy trunk, and let the sobs that were stifling her have their way, and shake the small, prostrate figure in its passion of grief.

'Sage! Sage!' Ludlow's voice called to her from within. 'Why, I thought you would have gone to bed, child. I had to walk into Shingle to send a telegram.—Why, what have you been about? Your dress is quite wet. Have you been sitting on the damp grass? What an incorrigible little Cockney it is! never thinking of the dew.'

CHAPTER XXIII.

Yes, and he too! let him stand

In thy thoughts, untouched by blame.

Could he help it? if my hand

He had claimed with a hasty claim?

That was wrong perhaps—but then

Such things be—and will again.

Women cannot judge of men.

MRS BROWNING.

Before telling of the conversation between Sage and Owen Ludlow that night, and of poor, little Sage's gallant efforts to shield her lover from the just reprobation of his friend, I must tell of Ludlow's letter which had occasioned him the walk into Shingle that night. It was one that most artists would have hailed with delight, and with almost incredulous delight moreover, seeing that it was a fancy price that had been put on Mr Ludlow's picture, for it was a letter from his agent in London to say that the picture was sold at the price put upon it, and a cheque for the amount paid in to his banker's. 'I did not think it necessary to telegraph to you before accepting the offer, as, with all respect to your picture, the price put on it seemed such as to preclude any chance of a purchaser; and I believe it is only because the lady has some special fancy for it, some likeness in one of the figures I think it is, that she offered what some might consider an out-of-the-way price for it; and as these fine

ladies' caprices are not to be reckoned on to last long, I thought it better to close the bargain before she changed her mind about it. The purchaser is Lady Lester, of Beechfield and Park Lane. Her solicitor, Mr Freestone, came about it with the cheque ready drawn; and as the picture has been at our place since the Academy closed, and was still in its packing-case, I told him it should be forwarded to her ladyship immediately. —Hoping that you will approve my prompt action, believe me, &c.'

Now, as Owen Ludlow had lost all pleasure or interest in the picture since that interview with Pomona, he had not the same feeling about selling it which had impelled him to put a fancy price on it; and if it had been any one else in the world but Lady Lester, he would have been quite contented to let it go and hear no more of it; but somehow, as coming from her, it seemed the price of the actual Pomona in flesh and blood, not the Pomona in paint on canvas. There had been no sense of barter or exchange twenty years ago, when he gave his little girl to Lady Lester, though, indeed, the price he gained then was comfort and freedom from galling responsibility; but now, the cheque seemed like the completion of the bargain, and the idea of a man bartering his own flesh and blood for coin of the realm revolted him. And then, too, he guessed wonderfully near the mark at what Lady Lester meant, and how she had interpreted his meaning in that miserable picture. She had taken it as a threat that he might lay claim to this beautiful, proud, young beauty, and drag her away from her brilliant position; and the price he casually put on the picture, just because he thought it was beyond the outside limit of possibility for any one to give, had been interpreted as the price of his silence.

Such, indeed, roughly speaking, had been Lady Lester's idea. Little by little, from one and another, she had found out about the strange likeness; and Pomona had told her about her meeting with the painter, this Mr Ludlow, who did not take her fancy, though Sage liked him so much. Pomona had thought that Martin's warning not to talk about Mr Ludlow had been a nervous fancy of the anxious, old servant; but certainly the subject did seem to excite Lady Lester most unaccountably, and she so often recurred to it and questioned and cross-questioned the girl about the interview, that Pomona grew quite unhappy, and privately consulted the doctor as to whether undue excitement about trifles were ever a symptom in cases like her mother's, and was reassured by him that, in cases of great bodily prostration, the mind and nerves could not be expected to keep their usual steadiness, and that the only thing was to avoid agitating subjects as much as possible.

Mr Freestone, who came down frequently to Beechfield, and to whom she gave instructions as to the purchase of the picture, was inclined to think that illness was affecting her mind, in this sudden whim for the possession of a picture that she hardly seemed likely to live to see, and which she apparently had no particular wish to see either, as she directed that it should be taken to Park Lane and remain there till further orders.

'Well, one comfort is she can afford it; and

Miss Pomona will never miss it out of her big fortune; and if she did, she would be the first to wish that half the estate should go, rather than Lady Lester should be thwarted in her smallest wish.'

It was with the greatest relief and satisfaction that Lady Lester received Mr Freestone's letter announcing the purchase of the picture, and enclosing the agent's receipt; but two days later a telegram arrived which upset her terribly, and made Pomona declare that no telegrams in future should be taken to her. It was from Mr Freestone: 'Some difficulty about picture. Artist declines to sell, but hope to arrange the matter.'

To which Lady Lester telegraphed in answer: 'Double the price if necessary.' A message over which Mr Freestone sighed and pondered deeply, considering how far it was right to carry out the wishes of a person clearly out of her mind.

When Owen Ludlow came back from Shingle, having despatched his telegram to his agent, bidding him, if possible, stop the sale of the picture, his mind was much more composed; and accordingly, he was much more observant, and Sage's dress, wet with the night-dew, and her wan little face, did not escape his notice, nor the nervous twisting and untwisting of her fingers, as she sat in the window with a bar of moonlight falling across her lap, where those tell-tale hands lay, while her face was carefully turned away from the glow of the red-shaded lamp on the table.

'The beggar's not coming,' Ludlow said to himself. 'Pon my word! it's too bad, and I shall tell him so, first chance.'

It was a little mortifying to Sage to find that, after her great self-control and composure, he should have remarked that there was something amiss; but still it made it easier to begin, and she said: 'I wanted to tell you that it is all over between me and Maurice—and,' going on quickly, in order to prevent what was likely to follow the sudden angry movement of Ludlow's arm and the laying down of his pipe—'and I think it is quite the best; and I quite agree with him.'

'May I ask the reasons, if there are any?'

'Yes; but you must not ask like that. You must be very kind to your little friend, for, though it is quite right, it is a little bit hard.'

'Yes, dear, tell me.'

'I have really known it all along,' she said; 'but he has only just found it out, that it is folly going on with this engagement of ours, when there is no prospect of any end to it. You see, he cannot get any situation that would enable him to marry, though several have turned up that would not have been so bad if he were not married.—Dishonourable? Hush! you must not dare to call him that, not to me.—You did not really mean it. It is my happiness he is considering all along, and he is quite right, for I should be miserable if he were not happy. If I had been like Pomona.—Oh! Mr Ludlow, I have never envied her before, but I can't help feeling it now. All that beautiful place and everything—I don't care about it for myself; but if I could have given it all to him—and I think I could have made him happy.' And here the poor, little voice, that had quavered and choked more than once, broke down utterly.

She was sobbing hysterically now; and he got up and paced up and down the room, angry with Maurice, pitying her, bitterly blaming himself.

Presently, when she was calmer, she got up and came to where he stood, at the other window, moodily gazing out into the night. She had dried her eyes and even managed a little pitiful smile, that was more pathetic than her tears.

'You must not be angry with him,' she said; 'it is quite right. It is just as much my doing as his. I think if he had not written to put an end to it, I should have done it. I am going to write to father to-morrow and tell him. I think he will be glad. I don't think he ever really liked Maurice. I've got father and Kitty and the boys still—and you,' she added shyly, holding out her hand. 'You will still be my friend.'

PIMENTO.

EVERY one must be familiar with the spice whose black grains, large as duck-shot, are known indifferently by the names of Pimento, Allspice, and Jamaica Pepper. This spice is the dried berry of a tree, the Pimento, found in the island of Jamaica, where it grows naturally to the height of some twenty or even thirty feet; and it is from Jamaica that the whole of the allspice put annually on the markets of England and the Continent is exported. Though a native of Jamaica, the pimento is not found distributed throughout the island; it refuses to grow upon the lower coast-lands, and only comes to its greatest development on the mountains that occupy the interior of the island and slope away to the sea. The northern parish known as St Ann is the chief district of the pimento cultivation, forty thousand of the ninety-five thousand acres there cultivated being returned as devoted to pimento. Another species of pimento, known specifically as *acris*, is also a native of Jamaica, and from the leaves of this tree the aromatic principle of the well-known bay-rum is extracted; but its cultivation has for some reason or other been neglected by the colonists.

The cultivation of the pimento exhibits some remarkable differences from that of other spices. In the first place, it has not been found possible to rear healthy plants from the seeds, and were it not that nature came to the help of the grower in this respect, the output of spice must, as soon as the present trees became old and unproductive, diminish and at length cease. Whatever may be the reason—and it does not seem that any one has taken the trouble to seriously seek for it—it is a fact, as many experiments have demonstrated, that seeds planted in the ordinary way produce only weakly plants, which, when they have arrived at the age when one might expect them to produce fruit, are either barren or bear only a meagre crop of berries. No greater success attends the attempt to increase the stock by means of slips; and so fully have these facts been proved, that no grower endeavours to rear his own plants, but leaves the work to the birds that throng the trees when the seeds are ripening.

One has only to see the numerous seedlings springing up throughout the pimento groves to acknowledge the wisdom of this course. In this

way, the original plantations, or 'walks,' as they are called, were established, and at the present time, when it is desired to stock land with pimento, the following plan is adopted. The ground, chiefly forest, having been chosen, a party of wood-cutters is employed to fell the huge trees, whose trunks are left lying where they fall as a protection to the young plants that will spring up by the beneficent action of nature. The smaller growth of bush and the limbs of the trees are gathered together and burnt, their ashes forming a manure. The land, thus cleaned, is planted with provisions, and being virgin soil, yields a bountiful return of yams, coconuts, and plantains. After the lapse of some months, one may see springing from the soil in different places the young pimento plants with their fresh green heads of aromatic leaves. Care must now be taken to keep away the cattle from the young plantation, until, indeed, the trees have grown sufficiently to put their foliage beyond the reach of the cows' teeth, as the temptation the spicy leaves offer is one not to be resisted, and a bite is generally fatal to any further development of the plant. After two or three crops of provisions have been taken from the soil, further cultivation ceases, and the short grass which only awaits its opportunity soon grows thick and sweet over the place where once the forest giants flourished. In two or three years, the pimento plants have grown sufficiently to allow of the pasturing of the cattle in the walk, and for the future the pimento grower has only to keep the ever-springing bush cut away, and to gather in August what crops the seasons send him.

Owing to the haphazard way in which the trees have been planted, one must not expect regularity in their disposition in the walks, and, as a fact, they are seen gathered into clumps, or scattered singly about the narrow valleys or swelling hill-sides, and not arranged in rows, as in other forms of cultivation. Mingled with the pimento, however, are the oranges, the prolific Seville and the sweet variety, limes, lemons, and other fruit-trees; not to mention those forest trees that have been saved to give shelter to the cattle; and the general view of a walk from some neighbouring hill is wonderfully effective by reason of the diversity of foliage. Perhaps the best time to visit the plantations is when the pimento throws out its blooms; then each tree is wreathed with masses of pale white flowers, whose fragrance spreads far and wide, and reminds one vividly of the poet's words:

Sabean odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest.

Around the sweet flowers hum thousands of small wood-bees; and a million tiny insects crawl and creep among the petals, offering a rich feast to the humming-birds and other insect feeders. Too short, however, is the period of feasting; for in a few days the tiny petals curl and wither, and fall in a white cloud to the earth as each breath of wind stirs the leaves. The walk loses its interest until the berries have swollen and are fit to be gathered.

In August, if the weather has been propitious, and if no storm or hurricane has swept the trees of either blossom or fruit, the pimento grower prepares to gather in his harvest. Early in the

week he gives notice to his headman that on the following Monday 'pimento-picking' will commence; and straightway word is sent to the surrounding villages. As a rule, each property has its own work-people, who live in the neighbourhood and work upon the plantation throughout the year; and it is to these that the grower looks for help in harvest-time. But if the property is large, or if the spice-berries are ripening quickly under a hot sun—for they must be gathered just before they turn black—it may be necessary to summon additional pickers. These are easily got; for the work is not heavy and the pay good. As they are paid by results—that is, on the amount picked—every man brings his wife and any children he may have able to pull the spice from the stem, and in this way the weekly earnings of a family may be considerable, considering the rate of wage of the country.

Early on Monday morning the gang of pickers will have gathered before the owner's house. Grouped together as they usually are, they form to a stranger rather a picturesque assembly—the men in shirt and trousers, with their formidable 'machetes' or cutlasses tucked under their arms, or stuck into the ground before them; and the women and girls in red and white turbans, with their garments looped up around the waist, so as to give greater freedom to the feet in walking. Each party is well supplied with large open bamboo baskets, the inevitable black iron pot for cooking, and calabashes or gourds for carrying water from the house into the walks. Large, coarse bags, in which to bring home the spice, are served out by the owner; and presently the whole company have scattered to their work. Their method of gathering the pimento is simple. One of each party of pickers, generally a lad—though the women and girls frequently perform this part of the work—climbs the trees, breaks off the heavily-laden branches, and drops them to the ground. If he is expeditious and skilful in his work, the 'breaker' will not take a long time to strip a tree of its spice, leaving it, from the loss of the branches, in rather a ragged condition. It is his business to keep the pickers constantly supplied; and as soon as he has 'broken' a tree, he descends, and carries the great bundle of branches to where they sit with their baskets before them. Immediately on receiving the spice, they proceed to take branch after branch in the left hand, while with the right they pull the round berries from their stems and let them fall into the baskets. In this way a practised picker will gather some seventy pounds of the green berries in the day, provided, however, the season be early and the pimento plentiful. On some properties, a different method of separating the spice from the branches is adopted, but this is only when a careful supervision over the workpeople is not exercised. A sheet is spread upon the ground, and the negro, grasping the branch in one hand, thrashes off the berries with a small stick, thus gathering a greater amount, as compared with the other method, but at the same time bruising the skin of the berry by his blows, and consequently reducing its market value.

As it is found that pruning the pimento is followed by serious consequences to the tree, in that the branch cut invariably dies back to the

main stem, which, however, does not occur when the branches are broken, the annual gathering of the spice not only relieves the tree of the burden of its fruit, but leaves it in a condition to put forth in a short time new shoots. As a confirmation of this statement, it may be mentioned that in the year following a poor crop, when the trees have not been extensively broken, the yield is far less than ordinarily, presumably because the trees have not been pruned in the process of gathering the pimento.

The scene in the walks when the picking is in full swing is both curious and interesting. As one rides through, the different parties of pickers may be seen, each sitting in a semicircle at the foot of some tree, busily occupied with their work. Not far off is a fire, over which is bubbling the iron pot containing the mid-day meal of vegetables; and at times one of the party leaves his work to attend to it. In the midst of a shaking pimento-tree, the 'breaker' is seen snapping off the branches of spice and throwing them to the ground, where they fall lightly by reason of the leaves attached to them. If the tree be young, and he dare not risk his limbs upon it, he has a long crooked stick, by which he can easily bring the bunches within reach of his arm. There is usually much chatter and laughter, for the negro is merry hearted; and if the spice be plentiful, he can reckon upon making a good day's wage. Towards evening, when already the sun has nearly dipped behind the forest hills, the negroes begin to return from the walks, the men bearing the heavy bags of spice upon their heads, the women the baskets, and the children the iron pot, the calabashes, or other belongings of the family. The scene of interest is now transferred to the barbecues—those great stone terraces on which the coffee and pimento are dried. Up the steep steps struggle the heavily laden men, and throw their burdens with a thud upon the barbecue. Now commences the work of measuring the quantity gathered by each negro. A flour-barrel has about one-third of its length sawn off and the ends removed, and this serves as the accepted measure. Being filled with the green and black berries, it is lifted up, leaving a heap of spice on the barbecue. This is a half-barrel, but the remainder of the barrel is also used as a measure, and is termed the quarter-barrel. When each picker has had his spice measured, a ticket is given to him indicating the amount he has earned; and on Thursday evening he exchanges this ticket for money.

For some days before the commencement of the picking, the barbecue-man—generally an old negro whose active days on the plantation are about over—has been busy making 'rakes' or brooms of the fan-palm, or in sweeping clean the terraces for the reception of the produce. And now that the first day's gathering is on the barbecues, he proceeds to spread out the pimento with his solid rakes until it covers the smooth surface to the depth of an inch. The whole area of the barbecues, frequently extensive, is divided by low ridges of stonework into terraces of varying extent, and connected with one another by openings in the stonework divisions. As fresh supplies of spice come in from the walks, the several divisions get quickly filled, since the gathering of one day is not mixed with that of

another until the whole crop has been cured. Under the burning sun of the tropics, the berries soon change colour; in one day they will have turned from a pale yellow-green to a light straw tint; and the barbecue-man is kept busy as the curing proceeds in turning them over with his rakes. He does this in the following manner: starting at one end of the long terrace, he pushes his rake before him down the length of the pimento spread out on it, so that there is formed a wide furrow, at the bottom of which the grains are thinly spread, while at each end of the rake as it moves a ridge is formed. As soon as he has completed one furrow, he repeats the process, commencing now from the end he has reached, and so continues until the whole surface is furrowed over. By frequent 'scoring,' as the process is termed, it is arranged that all the spice receives the full benefit of the sun's rays; and in six or seven days—or even earlier, if the sky has been cloudless—the colour of the pimento will have turned to a dull brown, its soft skin will have hardened to a leathery coat, and the stem dropped from the seed. By taking up a handful and shaking it at his ear, the grower can tell by the rattling of the kernels within the husk that the spice is cured, and he then puts it into bags to await the winnowing.

As the spice grows darker and darker and the end of the curing approaches, the anxieties of the grower and barbecue-man begin. Let but a shower of rain wet the nearly cured pimento and the value is at once depreciated, since it becomes mouldy; and no degree of attention afterwards will rectify the error. Hence, at the approach of rain—he can hear it falling far away in the forest, or see it rolling rapidly in a thin gray mist down the distant hills—the barbecue-man raises a shout, and at once the whole household is in movement. The grooms leave their horses, the cook her pots and pans; the other house-servants come fleeing out of doors; the owner and his family and the visitors run to lend their aid, carrying with them any brooms or brushes they may have caught up in their haste. Soon the barbecue seems to be alive, there is such a sweeping and raking of pimento, and bringing of palm-leaves and tarpaulins and boards—such a bustle and commotion to beat the weather. The rain is sweeping down the hills opposite; now it is in the valley beneath; two or three large drops are pattering down upon the heads of the workers. But the hard work is to be rewarded; the brown grains have been swept into a conical heap within the circular ridge in the centre of the barbecue, the tarpaulins are spread, then over these the palm fronds, and last the boards to keep all in place. Let the rain come; it can do no harm now. And it does come, racing across the broad terraces until they seem to smoke with the mist that rises from them: while the spouts of the gutters are shooting the water far out from the wall. For a good ten minutes the downpour lasts, and then passes on, and goes roaring across the far-stretching forest beyond. The sun breaks forth, and nature, refreshed by her bath, smiles once more; but the pimento so hardly saved is not uncovered that afternoon.

When the crop is cured, nothing remains to be done but to winnow and send it down to the

port. The winnowing or 'fanning' is done in a machine of American construction, in which the pimento passes through two or three sets of sieves, and is subjected meanwhile to a current of air directed upon it by a revolving fan. By this means the small unmarketable seeds, the stems and bits of plaster from the barbecues, are separated out; the clean spice is then packed in bags and sent away.

The price obtained at present for the produce is on the average about twopence-halfpenny per pound, and shows a great decrease upon that paid in years past. Unfortunately, there is every indication that a further fall is imminent, and in such a case it will no longer be profitable to gather the spice. All this seems to point to the fact that the taste of the public has changed with respect to spices, or at least that some other spice has taken the place in popular favour of the once favourite allspice. Still, about nine and a half million pounds are annually exported from the colony, the value of which is estimated at one hundred and three thousand pounds sterling. Pimento thus holds the fifth place of importance in the exports of the island, being exceeded in value only by sugar, rum, coffee, and fruit; but one must feel regret that an ancient source of revenue to the colonists—for pimento has been exported almost since the occupation of the island by the English—should be in danger of ceasing altogether.

LESS THAN KIN.

CHAPTER III.

'WHAT on earth does he mean?' cried Ena, as soon as the sounds of that stormy exit had died away. Until that moment, neither of the two whom Wakelin had left behind had spoken.

The vicar threw back his still handsome head, and answered with a sort of fiery dignity which would have satisfied the greatest sceptic of his guiltlessness. As to Ena, however, she needed no such assurance: 'He means that I stole, actually stole, that abominable money! I!'

'My dear father!' with incredulous surprise.

'Yes; it is an absurd charge!' So absurd, indeed, that now he could actually laugh at the remembrance of it, the excitement of the moment leaving no room for apprehension of any consequences which might ensue. 'I am not sure whether I may not even find myself compelled to prosecute the man for slander. I must take a lawyer's opinion upon that.—Who did you say, by the way, wanted me down-stairs?'

The girl displayed a card, which she had been all the time twisting between her fingers. But she looked grave. Perhaps a prevision of the dangers ahead had come to her more quickly than to the vicar, in his indignant exaltation of spirit.

'Only a Mr Daintry. "Marmaduke Daintry,"' she read aloud, absently. Then: 'But how wicked of Mr Wakelin to utter such words. Suppose Jane or any one had overheard them!'

'They'll have every chance in future, I imagine,' somewhat grimly, as the angry sparkle in his eyes slowly faded. 'But Mr Daintry! Why—Of course I'll go to him. Surely,

surely it can never be Jack come to life again after all these years.' In the curious agitation caused by this second shock, following so quickly upon the first, such an occurrence seemed almost credible, and he never noticed the difference in the Christian names.

It was, however, a person altogether unlike the tall, genial lad whom he so well remembered as his boyish playmate, and equally unlike the gray-haired, stalwart individual into whom time might have transformed that familiar friend, who turned from examining a photograph of Ena as the vicar entered the drawing-room. And Mr Russell actually started as he beheld a rather stout, dapper, remarkably well-dressed man of about thirty coming quickly forward, with a look of the utmost ease and self-possession, to return his host's greeting.

'Of course you don't know me? How should you?' the guest exclaimed heartily. 'Never set eyes on me before. And yet I hear that you have a cousin of mine in your own house, treated as your daughter! Awfully good of you, really! Can I see her at once?'

His mingled calm assurance and eager presumption almost took Mr Russell's breath away. For many a long day he had scarcely even remembered the facts of Ena's birth, or thought of her in any different light from that in which she regarded herself—as his own eldest daughter. No marvel, then, that, instead of speaking, he simply stared. But Marmaduke was fully equal to that trifling embarrassment.

'Don't wonder you're surprised. Never was more so myself than yesterday, when Sir George's—my grandfather he was, you understand—will was read, and I found out that such a person as my cousin existed and flourished. Lawyers explained, and seemed quite up in the subject. But I'd never heard a syllable about her, not a syllable, I assure you! Frightfully bad form of the old boy to let her sponge on you all these years, whilst he kept me in the dark too, and then to leave her every stiver he could alienate from the estate, don't you know?'

Gradually dawn was breaking upon the clergyman's brain, almost stunned as it had been by two successive blows.

'Sir George Daintry is dead, then?' he managed to insert between the last sentence and that which he could see already hovering upon his companion's lips.

'A week ago; and quite time too. Oh, beg pardon,' with a laugh, both amused and heartless. 'Really, he was so specially ill-tempered!'

'De mortuis'—began Mr Russell solemnly.

'Oh yes! Very wrong of me. But to return to Ena. I've come as quickly as trains would bring me, to see her, and fetch her home. My mother says that of course it's the only thing. Proper sphere, and all that, don't you know?'

Evidently delicacy was not the gentleman's strong point. But it was a lack upon which Mr Russell did not feel himself called again to comment. Instead, he asked a question, or tried to do so.

'Your father?'

'Died when I was a shaver. He was Sir George's eldest son, don't you know? and owing to this clearance, I'm the head of the family now,' drawing himself up to his full, though

not very imposing, height of five feet six. 'Ah no! Title isn't on my card,' observing Mr Russell's glance. 'Haven't had time to have fresh ones printed yet. So much to do, you see. And that reminds me—mustn't dawdle here all day. By the way, I ought to have a letter for you somewhere. The lawyers fancied you might want credentials or such sort of rot. Though, naturally, I said that was rubbish.'

The signature of the note which he finally produced and handed over to its owner happened to be known to the vicar as that of a most respectable firm of London solicitors; whilst its wording was plain enough to dispel any doubts as to the bearer's identity, as well as with regard to his news of Ena's fortune. Before Mr Russell had reached the close of the few curt, business-like lines, he understood how completely altered were the prospects of the girl who had been to him as a daughter; and in spite of an aching in his heart at the idea of what this change must mean for Mildred and himself, had made up his mind how to act.

'Are you aware that Ena is in utter ignorance of her parentage?' he said, addressing the Baronet, who, too restless to stand still, had during the short silence wandered off again in the direction of the piano, and was diligently examining the music scattered about its lid.

'Is she? Oh, well, that's soon put right. Let me try the effect of three sentences,' with another laugh. 'See here: "Ena, my dear," I should tell her, "I'm your cousin, Sir Marmaduke Daintry; and your name is the same as my own. You're a rich woman too, and must"—Eh, what?'

'I was trying to intimate,' with some sarcasm, 'that I cannot allow that method of proceeding. Though you appear unable to comprehend its possibility, it is a fact that the intelligence that she is not my child, and is without natural claim upon my wife's love, will come as a terrible grief to Ena. Therefore, I must choose my own time and mode for explaining matters both to her and to Mrs Russell.'

Only by dint of indomitable perseverance did the clergyman succeed in getting so far. Four times at least his audience had sought to interrupt; now he was to be kept in check no longer.

'Oh, but really, don't you know? I can't consent to this. Grief to hear that she's an heiress, and cousin to a Baronet? Bosh! my dear sir, bosh! Had too much to do with women to credit that!'

'Where has he been brought up?' was the unuttered thought in Charles Russell's mind. 'One expects some gentlemanly feeling and behaviour from a man of his standing. But this is a regular bear.' Aloud, however, he merely responded, with cold dignity sufficient to quell even Joseph Wakelin: 'I have told you my fixed decision.'

Sir Marmaduke shrugged his shoulders. He could scarcely object further to the wishes of the man who for twenty years had carried out a duty which of right should have been undertaken by his own neglectful family. Yet the resolute words angered him. 'Then am I not to see her at all?'—gruffly.

'Not to-day. Should you be at liberty in a week's time to return, we shall be happy to

receive you. Possibly, if in the meantime Mrs Russell has heard from your mother, you may be able to persuade Ena to visit your home and make the acquaintance of your people. I do not wish to keep her from those to whom she stands in such near relationship. But?—

'Ah, just so! I understand,' throwing off the sullenness which had for a moment clouded his features. 'The mater wanted to write before, but I said where was the need for ceremony between relatives? This day week, then, for Ena. Afterwards, she and I, don't you know? may have a good deal to do with each other. Good-bye, good-bye.'

And absolutely before Mr Russell had quite grasped the meaning of that final hint and smiling nod, the man was in the hall, through the door, and out upon the pavement of the street. When, however, at length the laudable intentions of the Baronet did make themselves plain to the vicar, he smiled. 'Fortunately, we can trust Ena's taste,' he muttered, half aloud. 'But what will she and Mildred say to such a parting as this may involve?'

That was a problem very speedily to be tested, for, as he stood there pondering it, the door of the dining-room unclosed, and the sound of women's voices in earnest conversation reached his ears. In another second his wife and their adopted daughter entered together.

So entirely had the latter interview driven away for the moment all remembrance of that which had immediately preceded it, that he looked at the two grave, troubled countenances with wonder. Could they have overheard? Did they guess? But Mildred's exclamation immediately enlightened him.

'Oh, my dearest!' she cried, coming close up to him and throwing her two arms round him, as though to shield the man she loved from all trouble, 'how dared Wakelin say such an awful thing?'

It was one of her husband's characteristics that though he could be and often was spiritless and moody without any particular reason, real grief and anxiety had a tendency—at least in the first moments of trial—to brace him to meet the burden with courage. Often as it fell to Mildred's lot to support him under protracted worry or in imaginary woes, his was the stronger soul at such times as the present. And now he stooped smilingly to kiss the upturned face, passing one arm tenderly about her waist as he did so.

'My darling, don't worry yourself; it will all come right,' he answered. 'I am confident that the money will even yet turn up. If not, we must make it good.'

'But your reputation,' urged the wife. 'A clergyman is so at the mercy of people. One breath of scandal and he is ruined for ever!'

It was too true, and he recognised the fact. Yet he still smiled.

'Milly, this isn't worthy of you. My dearest, remember that I am innocent, and that, therefore, my reputation has a better Guardian than myself. As I said to Ena a little while ago, if necessary I should not hesitate to bring an action for slander against Wakelin, and that would, I am convinced, abundantly clear me.'

'Only it was so unlucky that you should have

paid Clarke! And then, too, you specially told Wakelin to let you have gold, not a cheque, for I happened to hear you speaking of it to him in the hall. Everything is against you!'

Charles Russell sighed. In the first excitement and anger with which he had met the charge, he had not estimated the force of these details, as now, for the first time, he was conscious of doing.

'Well, if necessary, we must confess the truth, love, and humble our pride to own that your single gold bracelet afforded the ways and means of pacifying Clarke! As to the cheque, now that I have closed my banking account cheques are most awkward matters to manipulate. Only last month I was vowing never to accept another for any large amount.'

'If only other people can be induced to see and understand as we do!'

He had seldom beheld his wife so overwhelmed. And all the time he was conscious of another trial for her lurking in the background, acquaintance with which could scarcely be postponed. Mr Russell's heart felt heavy as lead.

'We must trust that they will,' he answered, with a cheerfulness he certainly did not feel. 'But, my dear, there is something I have learned to-day which I must tell you. No, Ena, don't go. It concerns you almost more than it does ourselves.'

How the intelligence was finally broken perhaps none of the three ever exactly knew. To watch the look of pain deepening in Ena's eyes as he unfolded his tale, to feel the heaving of Mildred's bosom as he pressed her to his side, and still to be obliged to continue his story, made that hour one of the hardest in Charles Russell's not very easy life. But the words were uttered at last. Ena had been made to comprehend that though the love which had always surrounded her still remained, her claim upon it had vanished. She saw herself, rich indeed in the public esteem, but deprived by one stroke of father, mother, sister, and brother. And the whole of the little world in which hitherto the girl had lived and moved seemed suddenly to be split and rent to its foundations. With a sobbing cry, she sank down on her knees before Mildred, who was sitting on the couch, and buried her face in that familiar lap. A poor consolation seemed the promised fortune for all that she was losing! 'Oh, mother, mother,' she wailed, 'don't desert me like this!' Such an entreaty could meet with but one response. In another moment she was resting on the same breast where, long ago, she had wept out her woes, and Mildred's tears mingled themselves with her own.

'My sweet child, we shall never desert you. Your father left you to us, and we have always loved you. Do you think anything could separate us now?' she whispered reassuringly; whilst her husband took a short walk to the window, and then brushed his handkerchief two or three times across his face before applying it, with ostentation, to its more legitimate use.

'And just as Dick is on the way home, too. Oh, mother, what will Dick say?'

Mildred shook her head. 'Poor Dick! It will be a sad return for him altogether, I'm afraid. Troubles never come singly; but to-day has brought more than its share, I do think.'

'Though one can quite suppose that some people, with more sense than we've got, might regard Ena's legacy as a mitigating circumstance,' spoke up Mr Russell from his station across the room. But notwithstanding the raillery, he did not turn his head, or for the moment expose his own countenance to inspection.

'Legacy! What's a legacy?' from the ungrateful recipient. 'Who can suppose that money would make up for all that this has taken from me? Oh dad, you will care for me still?'

And so the scene went on, until gradually they had talked themselves into at least a partial realisation of the state of the case, and some slight resignation to its obligations.

'For that you ought to accept Mrs Dainty's invitation, and visit her, there's no doubt,' the vicar declared.

'Mrs Dainty? Oh, the Baronet's mother. What a trial for her to miss being my lady,' remarked Ena with a laugh, which, though but the ghost of her usual gay ripple, at least told of returning spirits. 'And how do you like Sir Marmaduke, father? You did not mention that.'

A difficult question to answer with combined truth and civility to the absent. Happily, however, whilst he hesitated, Mr Russell was spared the need for reply. With a fling the drawing-room door was thrown open, and Bijou danced in, dragging a tall, well-set-up young man by one hand, and sending her announcements ahead in her shrillest tones. 'It's Dick,' she screamed. 'I was digging weeds up in my garden, and found him, and he's come home to stay. He says so!'

Even Ena's troubles and Joseph Wakelin's suspicions were forgotten in the delight of that meeting and greeting. And Dick's protest that he wasn't a weed himself, whatever Bijou might consider him, was smothered in his mother's embrace.

SOME EARLY LONDON CONCERTS.

THE modern lover of music has such plentiful fare provided for him well nigh every day of the year, that it is difficult to realise how comparatively recent is the great growth of concerts and musical entertainments of all kinds with which we are now so familiar. The pedigree of the London public Concert can be traced back to the later half of the seventeenth century. Before that period, private concerts were given from time to time by different members of the nobility; but the people generally had little opportunity of indulging a taste for high-class music, and had for the most part to be satisfied with entertainments given in public-houses by performers hired by the landlords. Sir John Hawkins tells us how in places like these 'half-a-dozen of fiddlers would scrape Sellenger's (or St Leger's) Round, or "Old Simon the King," with divisions, till themselves and their audience were tired; after which as many players on the hautboy would in the most harsh and discordant tones grate forth "Green Sleeves," "Yellow Stockings," "Gillian of Croy-

don," or some such common dance tune; and the people thought it fair music.'

Public concerts owe their direct encouragement to John Banister, who had won fame by his playing on the violin, and who succeeded the celebrated Baltzar as leader of Charles II.'s band of twenty-four violins. Pepys, in an entry in his Diary for February 1667, tells us the court gossip of the day—'how the kings viallin Bannister is mad that the king hath a Frenchman come to be chief of some part of the kings musique.' It was rumoured that he was dismissed the royal service for saying that English violins were better than the French—a statement which was no doubt regarded as heretical, opposed as it was to the prevailing court view as to the superiority of France in all questions of taste, and especially with regard to music. Banister's concerts, at the close of the year 1672, were advertised in the 'London Gazette' as follows: 'These are to give notice that at Mr John Banister's house (now called the Musick School), over against the George Tavern in White Fryers, the present Monday will be musick performed by excellent masters, beginning precisely at four of the clock in the afternoon, and every afternoon for the future precisely at the same hour.' Four years later on, we read again: 'At the Academy in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields will begin the first part of the Parley of Instruments, composed by Mr John Banister.' The admission was at this time as a rule one shilling; and these concerts seem to have been held pretty regularly down to within a short time of Banister's death, which took place in 1679.

Another person who did much to promote a taste for music was Thomas Britton, better known as the 'Small-coal man,' who gathered a circle of music-lovers around him at this period in his unpretentious home in Clerkenwell. Among his guests were Woolaston the painter and Hughes the poet, as well as Dr Pepusch and Handel, who at this time had still his fame to make. To these weekly concerts, held in a long narrow room over his shop, the poet tells us that Apollo

Led his train,

And Music warbled in her sweetest strain—

the train including the beautiful Duchess of Queensberry.

More important than Britton's musical club was the founding in 1710 of the Academy of Ancient Music, for the practice of ancient vocal and instrumental music. This association was formed at the 'Crown and Anchor Tavern' in the Strand, under the direction of Dr Pepusch, the gentlemen and boys of St Paul's and the Chapel Royal taking part in the performances. The Academy had the honour of performing Handel's 'Esther,' the members appearing dressed in character; and its success is said to have led Handel to consider the desirability of establishing oratorio performances at Covent Garden. Fashionable society was at this period divided into factions, which grew out

of the rivalry of Handel and Bononcini, concerning which Byrom wrote the well-known lines :

Strange that such difference should be
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

The unfair ban, however, under which Handel was placed, was not shared in by the king and queen ; and a story is told of Lord Chesterfield leaving the empty theatre, in which an oratorio was being sung before the king, and giving as his reason that he did not desire to intrude on the privacy of his sovereign.

The oratorio—invented in the middle of the sixteenth century by St Philip Neri, as a counter-attraction to the theatre—was first made popular in this country by the author of the 'Messiah.' As organist to the Chapel of the Duke of Chandos at Canon's he was the first to introduce organ concerts, and did much to recall sacred music from the neglect into which it had fallen in England. St Paul's Churchyard was then a centre to which music-lovers gathered, and many of the neighbouring shops were famous for their musical instruments, temptingly exposed to the view of those who attended the services of the cathedral, held twice every day. The meeting of so many musicians in this vicinity led to the establishment of regular concerts at the 'Queen's Head Tavern,' under a certain Talbot Young. Later on, they were held at 'The Castle Tun,' and won a certain amount of fame under the style of 'Castle Concerts.' This tavern had once been kept by Shakespeare's friend and fellow-actor, the comedian, Richard Tarleton, and was situated near the famous 'Dolly's Chop-house,' in Paternoster Row. The old 'Tun' perished in the Great Fire, but was afterwards rebuilt, and in the new building the 'Castle Society of Music' gave their performances, assisted by some of the vocal talent of the operas.

Benefit concerts seem to have been given from time to time at the various theatres, one given by Signor Carbonelli, a celebrated violin-player, and pupil of Corelli, took place at Drury Lane in May 1722, its programme, which was divided into three 'acts,' including 'a New Concerto for Two Trumpets,' 'a Song by Mrs Barbier,' 'a New Concerto by Albinoni, just brought over,' and a solo on the arch-lute by Signor Veber—a selection which shows the prominence of Italy at this time in all things musical, Carbonelli having been brought to England by his patron, the first Duke of Rutland.

An amusing concert bill of the time of Queen Anne, which has been preserved, enables us to form a good idea of the kind of entertainment then provided for the general public. The programme consisted of music, several opera songs, 'pleasant Dialogues and Commical Dances.' These dances, which were all to be represented in 'Habits according to the Fashions of the Countries,' included sketches of 'an Irishwoman,' 'a Spaniard and his Lady,' 'a French Peasant and his Wife in wooden shoes,' as well as 'Two Hugonots.'

The songs began patriotically with the 'Genius of England,' the sombre character of 'O Land me in some Peaceful Gloom,' being followed by the brighter strains of 'Let all be Gay.' In those days of amorous swains and dainty shepherdesses, the song of 'Cynthia now is cruel grown' and 'Strephon the Bright' must have found a re-echoing response in the breasts of the Corydons and Strephons present. The Dialogues seem to have been quite in the spirit of the Christmas pantomime, including 'Since Times are so Bad'—apparently no novel theme, even in those days—and 'Oh! my Poor Husband,' irresistibly appealing to all married folk. This performance, which resembles a variety entertainment rather than a concert, lasted from six in the evening until nine ; and the price of seats was 'an English shilling the pitt ;' and an 'English sixpence the upper seats.'

Vauxhall was now coming into prominence with its al-fresco concerts, for which the celebrated Dr Arne, the author of 'Rule Britannia,' composed many of his best-known songs. Even in the days of Charles II. it seems to have been a place of popular entertainment, for Pepys tells us that he went 'by water to Fox Hall, and there walked in Spring Garden: But to hear the nightingale and other birds, and here fiddlers, and there a harp, and here a Jew's trump, and here laughing, and there fine people walking, is mighty diverting.'

Ranelagh, too, was opened for evening concerts in the summer of 1742, when Beard was the principal singer, and Festing led the band. It was here, about twenty years later, that an infant prodigy, no other than the eight-year-old Mozart, performed on the harpsichord and organ several pieces of his own composition for the benefit of a charity.

The Madrigal Society and 'the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club' date from this period—the Catch Club holding dinners at the 'Thatched House Tavern' every Tuesday from February to June, when 'canons, catches, and glees' were performed by the members, prominent among whom at one time was George IV. This club celebrated its centenary in 1861.

More important, however, in the history of English art is the establishment of the 'Concerts of Ancient Music,' an idea originally suggested by the Earl of Sandwich ; and it was out of this Society that the famous Handel Commemoration arose in 1784. Though it held its first season in rooms in Tottenham Street, it is with the Hanover Square Rooms that the history of the Society is most intimately connected, for it was here that Catalani made her first appearance, as well as Miss Stephens, who afterwards became Countess of Essex. Up to the close of the last century, however, the concerts were held in the rooms in Tottenham Street ; and for a few years in the concert room of the Opera House, before becoming permanently established in Hanover Square at the commencement of the present century. The Hanover Square Rooms were for some time carried on by Sir John Gallini—who had taught the children of George III. to dance—after a similar fashion to the rival establishment of Mrs Cornely's in Soho Square. Masquerades, 'festivos,' assemblies, and so forth, alternated

with more serious musical productions. The Rooms were first opened with a concert given by Charles Abel and John Christian Bach, who continued for several years to entertain the musical world here; while later on 'The Professional Concerts' were rivalled by those of Salomon the violinist, at which Haydn in the closing years of the last century conducted his twelve 'grand' symphonies. Here, too, John Braham was introduced to the public as a tenor singer.

Meanwhile, the ancient concerts were patronised by royalty, and George III. would constantly show his interest in them by writing out the programmes of the performances with his own hand. Often, accompanied by Queen Charlotte, he was present at the Hanover Square Rooms, and is said to have had a chamber added to the side, called the 'Queen's Tea Room,' to which he presented a large gilt looking-glass. A special feature of these concerts was the total exclusion of all modern music, the pieces selected for performance having to be at least twenty-five years old.

While lovers of high-class music were being thus well catered for, we can catch a glimpse of the sort of fare provided for the mass of the population from a work by George Alexander Stevens, published in 1761, called the 'Adventures of a Speculist, or a Journey through London.' An entertainment seems to have been then common under the style of Comus' Court, which appears to have contained the germ of the future music-hall. 'We went,' he tells us, 'to Comus' Court, as they call it—one Jack Speed's White Horse, Fetter Lane. These meetings were on the same plan as Sadler's Wells, where people might sit and smoke and drink, and hear singing, and see all the posture-makers and tumblers, yet only pay so much for liquor, and have all these comical fancies into the bargain. One plays with a rolling-pin upon a salt-box, another grunts like a hog, and a third makes his teeth chatter like a monkey.'

Much pleasanter must it have been to have heard Tenducci sing at Ranelagh, or Joseph Vernon at Vauxhall.

To revert to the ancient concerts—in the closing years of the last century two famous singers lent a brightness to these performances: Mrs Billington, who appears as St Cecilia on the canvas of Sir Joshua Reynolds; and Madame Mara, whose great merits were first fully appreciated in the Handel Commemoration at Westminster Abbey. Meanwhile, the Academy of Ancient Music closed its career in 1792. There was no dearth of good music, however, for Harrison and Knyvett had just set on foot the Vocal Concerts; and a little later on Mrs Billington, Braham, and Signor Naldi delighted audiences at Willis's Rooms; while Madame Catalani competed for popular favour in Hanover Square. In 1813 was established that still flourishing Society, the Philharmonic, whose concerts became associated later on with the Rooms in Hanover Square. The last concert held in these time-honoured Rooms was given in the year 1874; and the Club of to-day must be haunted by the musical echoes of many a bygone performance. Thus the opening years of the present century found the system of concert-giving firmly established; and the appreciation

for this class of entertainment has been ever since growing, as the enthusiasm of a St James's Hall audience can testify as far as London is concerned.

THE WINNING OF PADDON MANOR.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

ON a bright morning of April 1813, I, Joseph Smerdon, mariner, stepped ashore on Dartmouth quay with as heavy a heart under my shag waistcoat as any man carried that day in Devonshire. You may judge if there were not reason for this, when I tell you that three weeks before I had been first-mate of an Indiaman called the 'Arcot,' having in her hold a venture of my own which must have brought five hundred pounds at least, and now this had vanished away.

Seven years had gone since I last saw England, much less my native place, which was Teignmouth. In that time I had voyaged the Indies up and down, in country ships for the most part, making here a little and there a little by trading on my own account. In 1811 I was master of a transport, when General Auchmuty went to Java, and happening to do some service there, when I returned to Calcutta the gentlemen of the company recommended me to the captain of the 'Arcot,' whose first-mate had died of the cholera-morbus. Of the voyage home there is no need to tell; but, alas! whether through fog, or misreckoning, or premature rejoicing, or all three, a March morning—luckily, a calm one—found us hard and fast on the rocks between Ushant and the Cape Finistère. This was in the days when we were at war with France, and the French *chasse-marées* were not long in finding us out, and consigning us to dismal 'chokey' (as we say) in Brest. But at that time a great number of honest fellows from our west country were free of the French coast, and willing to be of service to people detained against their wills in France or England; and so it happened that the 'Polly' of Dartmouth left Roscoff with Joseph Smerdon in her hold, as well as fifty tubs of cogniac, and a grievous smell of stale sprats, to deceive inquisitive noses.

But if a man is no more than forty-two, and a sailor used to ups and downs, a dinner such as I had at a tavern near the Butter Walk, and a quart of ale with it, puts a different look on things. And after all, I might have been much worse off; for my sea-boots, so old and worn that the Frenchmen thought them not worth taking, had stowed in their linings over a hundred gold mohurs, worth each a guinea and a half. So that I was provided against want for many months, as I reflected with satisfaction, sitting in the parlour window and looking out on the river, and the craft straining at their anchors in a strong ebb-tide, the green hills winding away to Dittisham, and the old gray castle on guard at the mouth.

Now, that you may understand my story, I must tell you something of my belongings. I was born and bred in Teignmouth; and my father was a royal-navy man, boatswain of the 'Oxford' at the time of his death. My mother had a brother named Jonathan Westcott, a

small shipbuilder at Teignmouth, who was good enough to allow me to make myself useful about the yard; and in due time I was apprenticed to him, till, my indentures being out and having no money to set up with, I took to the sea, and found my trade of good service to me.

Now, my uncle was not, I believe, a bad sort of man, and gave me no more cuffs and rope-ends than is necessary to make a boy stick to his work. But he loved money as well as any banian trader, and, as is always the case, this grew stronger every year. He took a hand in smuggling ventures, like most people there, and owned two ketches, carrying clay and moorstone sometimes as far as London. But the year before I left him, his prosperity seemed to increase, and no one could tell how. He had always lent money; but now he lent more, and he bought the 'Unity,' as nice a lugger as ever cleared her cost in two runs to Roscoff. Her skipper was one John Bickford, an Exmouth man, and whenever he was in port he would visit my uncle, and they would sit over their rummers till sometimes my uncle would have to be carried to bed.

That afternoon I bought shore-going clothes, of which I stood greatly in need, and then began to think of the best way to reach Teignmouth. A boat, of course, would have suited me best; but I could find none going there, and had no mind to charter one. The road by Tor Bay and St Marychurch was a bad one, and I resolved to take passage next morning in a boat going to Totnes; and so by the highway to Newton-Bushel and down Teign side—some fifteen miles in all. So I embarked early; and we went swiftly up with the flood-tide, while I smoked a pipe and watched the river wind and turn among the hills, and the woods breaking into young green; and the air of my native land was sweeter than ever after the stinks and fevers of the Indies for so many years. And when we came to the ancient town of Totnes, I landed at the bridge, and set my face for Newton, without other baggage than my gold and a good oak staff, such as we called a 'Plymouth cloak.'

I found Devonshire hills at first somewhat trying to my calves, after such long absence; but I knew where a mile or more might be saved by a right of way through the Paddon estate, belonging to Squire Hilliard. I found the stepping-stones on the bank, got over, and having crossed one field, rested at a stile to smoke. Just as I had seated myself, I turned my head, and beheld Squire Hilliard himself, a stern and active man of fifty, a terror to poachers and vagrants, coming towards me like Giant Despair whom I used to read of, and two keepers with him. I stood up and raised my hat, and he seemed astonished.

'Fellow,' he said, 'what are you doing trespassing here?'

'Your worship,' I answered, 'it is no trespass. This is a right of way, acknowledged this forty years, for the use of people going on their lawful occasions.'

'Ha!' he replied—'a sea-lawyer, it seems. And who may you be, and what is your lawful occasion, as you call it?'

'I am a sailor,' I said, 'as your honour sees—Joseph Smerdon by name, lately escaped from

the French, and going to Teignmouth to visit my uncle, Westcott the shipbuilder.'

'Indeed,' he said. 'Then you had best be going, for it is a long way. Give my respects to your worthy uncle, if he be yours, and tell him to drink less rum and more water.' With these words he went on his way, and I on mine, wondering why he should care if my uncle drank or not. But this meeting recalled to me that Squire Hilliard and my uncle were indeed acquainted, and the strange manner of their becoming so.

Two-and-twenty years before, Squire Hilliard had acquired Paddon, not by purchase or inheritance, but by winning it on a wager from a gentleman named Rendell. Squire Rendell was the wealthier of the two, for he owned Paddon, and another place called Darleigh, near Ashburton; while Squire Hilliard's land, Utcumbe by name, was at Bovey-Tracey. Now, it chanced as they followed the hounds one day, Squire Rendell and his horse fell into a deep pool of Teign, and were got out with much trouble. At the hunting dinner that evening there was laughter at his expense, which so vexed him, that, having much wine aboard, he laid a wager with Squire Hilliard, of Paddon Manor against Utcumbe, which was worth far less, that they should swim their horses out into Tor Bay, the one who should first turn back to lose.

So on a calm day they and some of their friends rode down to the Tor Abbey sands, and the two gentlemen entered the sea, both horses and riders barebacked. My uncle, as a responsible kind of man, was at hand in a sailing-boat, and Jack Bickford with him, as well as two or three gentlemen, who were to be the umpires. They swam on bravely till about a cable's length from the shore, when Squire Rendell's horse, which was leading, was taken with a cramp, the water being bitter cold, and went down bows foremost, so that his rider was very near to be drowned, for he could swim but little. They brought him ashore with all speed, and recovered him, while my uncle and Bickford went out and fished up the horse with a creeper. No one expected that Squire Hilliard would hold his friend to the terms of the wager; but he did so, being, as was known, heavily in debt to people in London. So Paddon was made over to him; but all the gentry thereabouts looked coldly on him; and he had, as we say, himself to himself, turning from a wild young fellow into a hard and disagreeable man.

I reached Teignmouth late in the afternoon, rather tired and footsore, by reason of new shoes. Little or nothing seemed changed there, in the little crooked streets smelling of tar and fish, any more than the hills around were changed, or the broad Teign, with the boys picking cockles on the mud flats, or the great red bluff of the Ness; and my uncle's yard was there, with a fishing-smack hauled up for repair. I walked across to the little house with the green door and rapped on it. An old woman opened it, and I asked if Mr Westcott were within.

'Iss fai,' she answered, 'but martial busy. Do'ee want vor to spake to'n particlar.'

'Tell him his nephew is here,' I said.

I heard the word nephew, followed by some

growling. Then she came back, saying: 'Plaze to step in, zar;' and I entered the little white-washed room, with a window like a porthole looking on the yard, which I knew so well.

My uncle sat at a deal table with pen and ink, and a raffle of papers before him. When I had last seen him, he was a hale man, under forty; but he was almost sixty now, white-haired, and leaner and more stooped than he should have been, though his eyes were yet keen and his face not much wrinkled.

'Tes you, Joe, come back,' he said, looking up. 'Well, you'm growed to a vine man. And how's zea zarved 'ee zince 'ee wur vule enough to take to it? Zame as it do zarve most volks?'

I told him of my late misadventure, and he began shaking his head sadly. 'Vive hundred pounds, Joe,' he said. 'Ay, that's a tarrable loss, if you'm spaken the truth. Haven't 'ee got nothin' left?'

'Something I have yet,' I replied.—'But how is it with you?'

'Bad's the best, Joe,' he said. 'Trade be arl gone skat. The yard do pay about wages, and no more. If 'twasn't vor vree trade and my zavins, I'd be to workhouse.—The "Unity"? Caught, Joe, long ago. Her's a revenue boat now; but Bickford's revenue too, chief-boatman to Exmouth. Her'll be here to-night.'

I did not set much store by this, knowing that he would have said the same if he had owned all the town; and I promised to come again later and tell him more. When I did so, I found John Bickford with him, a man of fifty, short and stout like a capstan, with a face hard and red as a lobster boiled, and a look of exceeding honesty.

I told them some foreign experiences, to their great admiration, and showed a sample of what I had with me, at which they, as old hands at concealments, were amused. But at the middle of the second tumbler I observed: 'I forgot, uncle, a message for you that I was charged with to-day.'

'A message,' said my uncle. 'Who vrom, Joe?'

'From Squire Hilliard,' I said; 'and his word was, that you were to drink less rum.'

I saw the two look at each other, and Bickford said: 'Ay, a careful man he be now, not like when we knowed 'n rust along.'

'And Squire Rendell, how is he?' I asked.

'Died two year ago,' said my uncle; 'and his zon drowd up sojerin' and married. Zame as you maight do to the zea, Joe, if you'm a mind. There's Mrs Pearce, to Newton-Bushel—Kate Harvey that was—keep'th the "Bull Inn." A good place it be, but beyond a woman to manage; and if zo be's you can't pass what you'm got vor ten times zo much, 'twas vor nothin' you lived ten year with me and travelled the world vor twenty.'

It was clear that my uncle Westcott and his chum did not want to talk about the two Squires, for they turned it off in some such way whenever I would have inquired further. And this shows that a man may err as well in saying too little as too much, for I began to think that all was not right in that quarter. Then I retired to my lodgings; and Bickford, who seemed free of the house, to a room up-stairs.

In the morning I was up and about, and met some that knew me, and missed some I had known.

I did not forget to make further inquiries; and they told me that Squire Hilliard was no fonder of the neighbours than they of him, though reckoned an able magistrate. He was unmarried; and what company he had at Paddon was mostly people who had met him in London, where he sometimes went. But of the new Squire Rendell they could tell nothing. However, one thing I learned, that there was some sort of intelligence between my uncle and Squire Hilliard, who had been known to recommend him to people who wanted money.

My most pressing business just now being to change my Indian gold into guineas, I walked to Newton-Bushel, and the Plymouth coach took me to Exeter, where the money-changers were astonished at finding a seaman unwilling to be cheated. As I got down from the coach at Newton on my return, I perceived the 'Bull Inn,' of which my uncle had spoken. I walked into the bar and rapped on the counter. Nobody came; but at the back of the house I heard a woman's voice in anger, and a man's using very bad words. I took the liberty to go round and enter the stable yard, where I found Mrs Pearce very flustered, and a hostler fellow very drunk and foul-mouthed, while two or three more stood by and gaped. Without more ceremony I kicked him out into the road, where he lay howling. Then I turned to Mrs Pearce, who was beginning to cry, and led her politely into the parlour.

'A dirty, vilthy, drunken baste,' she sobbed. 'Never was I carled such names avore, and in my own house. I'll hav'n to justice, zo I will.'

'Never mind, Kate,' I said. 'I did the like for you at Denbury Fair once.'

'Massy zave us! be it you, Joe?' she exclaimed. 'An' where have 'ee been this twenty year? I've got thicky bead necklace yet you bought me to Denbury.'

My former sweetheart was now a plump, dark-eyed woman of forty, with hardly a touch of gray in her curly black hair, though she said it was a wonder it was not white, with trouble and vexation. She had been a widow some two years, and well off, with no children; but, as she said, 'the trade were not vitty vor a lone woman.' In short, before I took my leave, promising to come again speedily, I saw that the 'Bull' and all it contained were mine for the asking without any question of money. Mrs Pearce would not hear of my walking back the six miles, but the spring-cart must be got ready. Whilst waiting for this, a lady and gentleman on horseback stopped directly opposite the window to speak with some one on the footpath.

'Squire Rendell an' his new-mar'd wife,' said Mrs Pearce. 'Baint'm a handsome pair, Joe? Miss Lavis o' Chudleigh, she were, an' reckoned the best-lookin' maid in the county.'

'Not half what you were at her age, Kate,' I said. But this was a piece of poetry on my part, for the lady was truly handsome, not above two-and-twenty, tall and slim-waisted, yet firm and strong of figure, in her close riding-dress; in feature rather Spanish than English, as many are in our parts. But when I looked at her husband, I was amazed, for I knew him well, though I had never suspected who he was.

I have said that when we took Java I was master of a brig carrying troops. Now, in that

affair the Batavia fever and arrack wrought so upon our men that almost one-third of the force was unfit for duty, and a call was made for volunteers. I took the best of my men; and at the attack on the Dutch lines we worked a gun, as the General said, excellently well; and were not behind at the storming or in the enemy's camp. But though there was good fighting that day, none did better than Captain Rendell of the king's troops. He was the first man to enter the great redoubt, and ran through a gunner before he could put the linstock to a piece laid directly on our men. His sword—made by Government from hoghead hoops—broke short, and a vile native, like a crushed wasp, ran a kris into his leg; but he caught up a rammer, brained one Dutchman therewith, and kept the rest at bay till a musket-shot brought him down. I was there as they carried him to the surgeons, and heard his name; but it is a common one in our parts, and I thought no more than that he had well upheld the honour of Devon.

All the way back in the spring-cart, which jolted so for all its springs that I would as lief have walked, I had much to think upon as to how I should shape my course. But reflecting on how I had lost the gains of years of danger in an hour, and Kate declaring that a sailor's wife was no more than another man's widow, in a month's time Captain Smerdon, as I had a right to call myself, after the command of the transport, was landlord of the 'Bull,' and had introduced discipline there, which was all that was wanted, Kate knowing, as we say, all the ropes.

My uncle was not present at our wedding, being laid up with rheumatism; but as soon as he was about again, he came over to Newton and stayed with us for the night. We gave him a most excellent dinner as well as supper, and he did more than justice to them. But he being used only to spare living, the consequence was that Kate woke me that night, declaring that she heard thieves in the house. I took a candle and a cutlass and went out, but found no one. Hearing, however, steps in my uncle's room, which was next ours, I went in, and perceived him standing in his nightgear fast asleep, but with his eyes wide open. I would have gone out again and made the door fast, lest he should fall down the stairs, but at that minute he spoke.

'Cut'n away, Jack,' he said; 'don't 'ee lave a shred of 'n.' Then, after some mumbling: 'Three veet under, it must be, Jack.'

I knew that when a man is like this he will often answer questions, so I imitated Bickford's voice, who I knew must be 'Jack.'

'Why not your veet, zur?' I said.

'What a vule 'ee must be, Jack,' he answered. 'Water be too thick to see in, an' three veet deep'll catch's knees zo nice as may be.'

I nearly let fall the candle, as it flashed into my head what he was talking of; but before I could think of what to ask next, he spoke again. 'Iss zure, Squire,' he said, 'but vor cash down. Her deserv'th it vor the like of such vulishness.'

At this minute, Kate, wondering what I was about, opened the door hastily and upset a chair with a tin rushlight stand upon it. My uncle woke up, and seeing me stand there, with a

drawn cutlass, shouted 'Thieves!' and 'Murder!' till the whole house was aroused. I was so angry, that I could scarce trust myself to speak to Kate, and the rest of the night did nothing but kick and toss about.

For I saw clearly that in a few minutes more I should have learnt the whole of a vile conspiracy, planned by Squire Hilliard, and carried out by my respectable uncle and the honest Bickford, to rob Squire Rendell's father of his lands. This much I guessed, that the horse had not failed by reason of cramp, as was supposed, but from entanglement in a net or something of the sort laid there by them; and that my uncle had received a sum of money for this, which accounted for his sudden prosperity. But of this I had not a scrap of evidence or a word of writing to show, though goodness only knew what it might be worth to me if I could be the means of restoring Squire Rendell to his estate of Paddon.

But luck stood my friend, and in a way I least expected. Our business had begun to improve greatly, so that old Hawke of the 'World,' where the coaches stopped, grew jealous, and threw out nasty hints to the excisemen that I, as a sailor and my uncle's nephew, knew where to get good liquor cheap. So at last one day, as they came prying about my cellars, one of them, an impudent fellow named Curtis, said to me: 'I've bad news for you, captain.'

'Have you so?' I said. 'Then out with it, Mr Ganger, and let's have it over.'

'Why, that precious pal of your uncle Westcott's,' he answered, 'Jack Bickford, the chief-boatman to Exmouth, has been bowled out at last. 'Pon my oath, I believe the fellow had good interest somewhere to keep his place, for he's been hand-in-glove with the smugglers all along. But they found out that it was through him the whole force went on a wildgoose chase to Beer Head while a cargo was run at Starcross; so he's safe in Exeter jail, waiting for 'sizes.'

'Serve him right,' I said, 'for being a traitor to His Majesty.—But it will make no difference to me, whatever you may please to think.'

But it made a good deal of difference, for I saw that this was the time for a bold stroke, now that Master Jack was laid by the heels and could not get away. So the next morning the coach set me down in Exeter; and a crown to the turnkeys admitted me to that part of the jail where the prisoners not yet tried were kept.

THE 'MERMAID' AT THE ZOO.

VISITORS to the London Zoological Gardens should pay their respects to the most interesting of the many recent acquisitions, which is a young Manatee. This animal arrived in London in company with its mother; but she, poor beast, being bulky and short of breath, succumbed very soon to the frequent changes of conveyance which she had to put up with in order to get her to the Regent's Park. Weighing about half a ton, and being without the least capability of progressing on dry land, it is no wonder that the transport of the animal was a matter of the greatest possible difficulty both to her and her

conductors. The young Manatee, however, is well worth a visit; it is one of the most interesting animals in existence, and is, furthermore, not to be seen every day. It is true that the Zoological Society have had three or four Manatees in the last twenty years, but there has not been one on view for at least three years.

The Manatee shares with the Dugong of the eastern seas the distinction of being the only living representative of a group of animals which were once more plentiful. We find skeletons of extinct Manatees; and within the last hundred years, perhaps even more recently, a third member of the order, the Rhytina, has faded into extinction. This latter animal was, in point of size at any rate, a much superior beast to the Manatee, for it appears to have measured thirty-five feet or so in length; but, like many giants, it was of a peaceful not to say stupid disposition; and it had, moreover, no teeth to help it in convincing others of its right to continued existence; therefore, it ceased to exist. Very possibly, both the Manatee and the Dugong will follow in its departing footsteps, for they, too, are defenceless creatures, though they certainly have teeth; but these teeth are blunt and broad—useful for chewing the cud, but not to be relied upon for offensive purposes.

The great disadvantage under which the Manatee labours is its defectiveness of brain; the organ is small, and its surface is smooth, instead of being thrown into those folds, or convolutions, as they are more technically termed, which argue intelligence. In the long run, too, brain is more effective than muscle, even among animals.

In spite, however, of its intellectual defects, the Manatee has adopted a mode of life which will probably result in a longer lease of life to the species than if it had proved itself incapable of this alteration. We find the two species frequenting the rivers which flow into the tropical parts of the Atlantic; they occur, that is to say, in Africa and in America and the West Indies. The fact that they inhabit both sides of the ocean leads to the inference that they were once purely marine beasts; this assumption is of course strengthened by the fact that we meet with their remains in marine strata, rocks that have once formed part of the bottom of an ocean. So many marine creatures can also live in fresh water—the salmon is the most obvious instance—that it is not in the least surprising that the Manatee should have determined to change its habits. Now, this course of action must have been a move in the right direction, from, at any rate, one point of view. While grazing peacefully at the bottom of the sea, the Manatee would be liable to be interrupted by sharks and other carnivorous creatures of the deep, with which it would be entirely unable to cope. Such foes would be less abundant in rivers.

Why the Manatee, or the Dugong, should have—as some people think it has—given rise to the Mermaid notion is hard to understand; it would need, we should think, many additional rations

of grog to induce a sailor to make a detailed comparison between the shapeless, black, and bulky Sirenian and a damsel terminating in a fish. As has been suggested, 'Merpig' would be a more suitable name, though the Manatee indeed has not got the 'in'ards of a Christian,' as the pig is always said to have; its interior is constructed more on the plan of that of a cow, and, like that animal, the Manatee has a complicated stomach suitable to a vegetable diet. Its chief internal feature, however, is its enormous lungs; no doubt, these are contrived a double debt to pay, like the swim-bladders of certain fish. It is quite possible, from the habits of the animal, that it uses its lungs not only for breathing purposes, but also, when inflated, to enable it to rise to the surface of the water.

The Sirenia, as the Manatee and the Dugong are technically named, are, roughly speaking, hoofed animals, which have taken permanently to the water, just as the seals, and probably the whales, are carnivorous animals which have adopted a similar mode of life; and it is highly interesting to note that in both cases a certain amount of modification along precisely the same lines has taken place: in all these groups of animals, the hands—and the feet, if they are present—have become more like a fish's fin, while the whole body has assumed a form like that of a fish. In the whales and the Sirenians, the hind-limbs have almost completely vanished, leaving only the most inconspicuous traces of themselves. From this, one would argue that the whales and Sirenians have been much longer aquatic in their habits than the seals. The very first lesson that the student of zoology learns is not to judge by appearances; otherwise, the Manatee would be undoubtedly put down as a near relation of the seal, or perhaps even a fish.

CHRISTMAS-TIDE.

'A MERRY Christmas!' How the old words waken
A thrill and throb for many a Christmas fled,
For hopes fulfilled not, that the years have taken
Into their keeping, like the tears ye shed.

'A merry Christmas!' Let the happy chorus
Bring a new thrill, new freedom, new delight;
Past pain makes present joy but sweeter for us,
E'en as the dawn of morning after night.

'A merry Christmas!' Be ye thankful ever
For friendship that is left warm, sure, and strong,
For love that fills your hearts with high endeavour.
Live life anew. Ye do the Past no wrong.

'A merry Christmas!' Life has halting-places,
Where ye may pause in all the busy strife
To comfort those whose sorrow-stricken faces
Tell their own story in the book of life.

'A merry Christmas!' Raise on high the holly,
With spirits leaping at the sound of mirth,
Far nobler than all sorrow is your folly
That sheds 'good-will' and gladness o'er the earth.

HARRIET KENDALL.

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LANDMARKS OF A LITERARY LIFE.

FIFTY-TWO years ago a young English lady with literary aspirations sent to Messrs W. & R. Chambers, Edinburgh, a prose article and a poem, which she had the pleasure of seeing inserted shortly afterwards in *Chambers's Journal*. The lady was Miss Camilla Toulmin, who afterwards became Mrs Crosland, and her name a generation ago was as well known to the reading public as those of Miss Edna Lyall and Miss Annie Swan are to the readers of to-day. The connection which Miss Toulmin thus formed with this *Journal* has continued from 1841 to the present day, though our gifted and respected contributor is now eighty-one years of age. Her early association with the Messrs Chambers soon developed into personal intimacy, and when on visits to London, the brothers were in the habit of calling upon her, and thus a close and lifelong friendship was established between them. In 1845 she spent nearly two months in Scotland as the guest of one or other of the two brothers, and in her volume of reminiscences now published (*Landmarks of a Literary Life, 1820-1892*. London: Sampson Low, 1893) she gives graphic and interesting sketches of what she heard and saw when in their society. She visited Peebles with William Chambers, where he and his wife had summer lodgings; drove thither in beautiful July weather by the Pentlands and the Moorfoot Hills; slept for the first time in her life in a 'box-bed'; visited Manor Valley to see the cottage of bowed Davie Ritchie, the prototype of Scott's Black Dwarf; went down the Tweed and saw Abbotsford; and was taken about to the many places of antique and historical interest in and around the little ancient burgh itself. Also in their company she visited the Trosachs, Loch Katrine, Loch Lomond, and Glasgow. While a guest in Robert Chambers's house she met 'Delta' and others of the Edinburgh literary celebrities of the day. She tells some interesting anecdotes of the early life of the two brothers, which she had from the lips

of William himself, but these we need not reproduce here.

To return, however, and begin at the beginning. Mrs Crosland was born (we presume in London) in 1812, and her earliest recollection—a wonderful instance of precocious memory—refers to a period when she was little over three years of age. This was the reception in London in June 1815 of the news of the battle of Waterloo. She relates what she had often heard her mother speak of afterwards, and what in these modern days of psychical research would have been deemed worthy of note. The news of the battle did not reach London till the evening of Tuesday the 20th June; but on the previous Sunday evening—the day of the battle—her mother was seated on a balcony of their house until past ten o'clock. 'She declared she saw in the clouds images of horses galloping, mostly with riders, but some, she said, riderless. From her description she implied that the phantasmagoria lasted more than a quarter of an hour. Of course, when the news of the battle reached London, the coincidence was thought extraordinary; but so many people smiled at what they evidently supposed fancy or delusion, that, in later years, she grew cautious as to whom she related the incident.' 'I believe, however,' the writer adds, 'she learned that one or two other persons had a similar experience that evening.'

On the Tuesday evening following, when news of the battle actually reached London, her parents were present at a weekly whist club to which they belonged, and the whist-players were in full enjoyment of their game when they were startled by the newsmen's horns, and the cries of 'A great victory—Buonaparty defeated!' and 'Courier!' 'The cards were thrown down—the gentlemen rushed into the street to procure the paper at any price the newsmen asked. The details were comparatively meagre, yet they were ample enough to convey some idea of the victory gained, and to break up the party, sending home several medical men who were present, and who intended to proceed to Brussels, and make arrangements to despatch medical students with-

out delay. The ladies also departed, for their task was to be up early to look out all the old linen they could find, and set themselves to work to make lint for the wounded.'

About 1838, when twenty-six years of age, Mrs Crosland—we call her so for convenience' sake, though she was not married until ten years later—seems to have begun to contribute to some of the leading annuals. These were still the days of 'Keepsakes,' and 'Friendship's Offerings,' and 'Books of Beauty'—a kind of publication long obsolete, and now only occasionally to be found in the cheapest rows of the second-hand book-shops. But good writers contributed to them—Scott, Thackeray, Disraeli, Ruskin, and many others who had names in the literary world. Some of these annuals paid their contributors well—Sir Walter Scott having received four hundred guineas for a short story which he wrote for the 'Keepsake.' In 1838, the 'Book of Beauty' was edited by that now almost forgotten author and woman of fashion, Lady Blessington, who accepted several poems by Mrs Crosland. The latter also 'wrote up' to engravings, as was generally the method of supplying the letterpress which accompanied these plates. The letterpress was required to illustrate the plates, not the plates the letterpress. Readers of 'Arthur Pendennis' will remember how Thackeray represents his hero as producing the beautiful poem, 'The Church Porch,' to meet the wants of a particular illustration sent him.

In the 'forties,' Mrs Crosland made the acquaintance, among other literary celebrities of the time, of Mr and Mrs S. C. Hall, and relates many interesting episodes in their lives as revealed to her while in association with them. Also Dinah Maria Mulock, afterwards Mrs Craik, author of 'John Halifax, Gentleman'—a novel which has retained its popularity in a marvellous manner. It was in 1842, at the table of Lough the sculptor, that Mrs Crosland had her first introduction to Robert Browning and Leigh Hunt. Browning, she says, was then a young man; 'but Leigh Hunt was the important guest, whom every one else was invited to meet.' So runs round the whirligig of time! She had no particular admiration for Leigh Hunt, but still was curious to see a man who, for at least a generation, had been prominently before the literary world. He played the Sir Oracle that evening, and harangued rather than conversed. 'He dwells in my memory as a thick-set man of nearly sixty, with fine dark eyes and whitened hair, with his portly person encased in a white waistcoat, which was amply displayed by his habit of throwing back the lapels of his coat and inserting his thumbs in the armholes of the waistcoat. In this attitude, and leaning back in his chair, he discoursed to what for the most part seemed an admiring audience. I must confess that he seemed to me the very type of self-satisfied vulgarity: a man without reverence, and consequently without the breadth of understanding which reverence gives.' Robert Browning, whom years afterwards I had the privilege to know well, spoke comparatively little that evening; but I was struck with the quiet dignity of his deportment, and his expression of commanding intelligence.'

The friendship of Douglas Jerrold was also one of Mrs Crosland's acquisitions in those years. She spent an afternoon in his house at the time the Candle Lectures were appearing in *Punch*. 'Towards the close of the meal a packet arrived—proofs, I fancy—at any rate Douglas Jerrold opened a letter which visibly disturbed him. 'Hark at this,' he said, after a little while; and then he proceeded to read a really pathetic, though not very well expressed letter from an aggrieved matron, who appealed to him to discontinue or modify the Candle Lectures. She declared they were bringing discord into families, and making a multitude of women miserable. I believe the letter to which I allude gave Douglas Jerrold great pain.' Mrs Crosland is of opinion that while Jerrold had the reputation of a wit, his witticisms bordered too nearly on tiresome punning to be of the first order. 'For example, on inquiring in society, about the year 1854, who a certain gentleman was, he was told, "Mr Mills, from Manchester." "Indeed," he promptly replied; "why, I thought all the mills had stopped there."'

To leave literary reminiscences aside for a moment, we have a very interesting notice of the famous engineer, the elder Brunel, the designer and constructor of the Thames Tunnel, through which thousands of our readers must have passed. The tunnel has long been overshadowed by greater engineering feats; but at the time of its construction it was regarded as a really great enterprise. The work was begun in 1825, and the tunnel was opened in 1843. Sir Isambard Brunel and his wife were old when Mrs Crosland knew them; but Lady Brunel told her of their way of life during the years when the tunnel works were in operation. 'They resided near the shaft at Rotherhithe, and, through day and night, every two hours a sample of the earth excavated was submitted to Brunel for his examination; and in accordance with its character were the instructions given for the next two hours of work. Writing materials were always ready in his bedroom at night, and a bell was so hung as to ring near the bed. There was also a lift by which the sample of soil ascended, and by which, in return, the letter of instructions was conveyed. This broken rest was at first a great trial; but, after a while, the habit of awaking every two hours was formed, and Lady Brunel declared that for months after the completion of the tunnel she and her husband found it impossible to sleep for more than that period at a time.'

In the summer of 1845, Mrs Crosland made the acquaintance of Mary Howitt. The former was long past the age and the inexperience of those who imagine that authors and authoresses should look different from other people, yet her first impression of Mrs Howitt was one of mild surprise at finding that lady such an exceedingly motherly sort of personage. She was of medium height, rather stout, with prominent features, slightly projecting teeth, and hair already gray, though she was not yet fifty. There was also about her a stamp of provincialism which she never quite lost. Her husband, William Howitt, was a very agreeable man if you agreed with his opinions, but was essentially pugnacious, with deeply rooted prejudices. Mrs Crosland

ventures to think that his wife must have required all her amiability to get along with him as well as she apparently did. The same thing has been said of Mr and Mrs Carlyle; but these rank among the higher interests of the literary world. Of Mr and Mrs Howitt, possibly not half-a-dozen persons will now think twice.

Among the American authors whom Mrs Crosland knew was Nathaniel Hawthorne. This was in 1854. She describes him as in the mid-prime of life, a stalwart man, with blue eyes rather small for the size of his head, but having a peculiarly soft impression. In society, she says, 'he was one of the most painfully shy men I ever knew. I never had the privilege of an unbroken tête-à-tête with him, and am under the impression that with a single listener he must have been a very interesting talker; but in the small social circle in which I first met him, it really seemed impossible to draw him out. We were only five or six intimate friends, sitting round the fire, and with a host remarkable for his geniality and tact; but Hawthorne fidgeted on the sofa, seemed really to have little to say, and almost resented the homage that was paid him.' He afterwards spent an evening in Mrs Crosland's own little cottage, and she observed him enter into an earnest conversation with Philip James Bailey, the author of 'Festus.' A dozen people were chattering round about them, but this did not interrupt their talk with each other; though, curiously enough, it was not till later on in the evening that each knew the other's name. Nathaniel and Bailey must here have discovered for themselves some elements in each other of a kindred spirit.

In the autumn of 1857, Mrs Crosland met Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning in Florence, and was received by them very kindly in the Casa Guidi. Robert Browning ushered her, on her first visit, through one or two apartments to the drawing-room, where she met Mrs Browning. The latter was a little below the middle height, and the loftiness and spaciousness of the room served to accentuate the fact, as she approached with 'that gliding movement' which is now gone out of fashion, but which in Mrs Crosland's young days used to be called 'swan-like.' 'Her abundant hair, falling in long thick ringlets, was of chestnut brown, and her eyes were of a similar hue, with a softness and sweetness of expression not possible to describe.' On the occasion of another visit, spiritualism was the subject of conversation, and Mrs Browning was anxious to borrow from Mrs Crosland a certain book on the subject. Mr Browning broke in, somewhat vehemently, begging her not to lend his wife the book, as he did not wish her mind to dwell on such things. 'I remember,' says Mrs Crosland, 'Mrs Browning exclaiming rather warmly, "Robert, my soul is my own!"—though, with wife-like obedience, she yielded.'

These 'Landmarks' of Mrs Crosland's which we have thus briefly brought under review, are full of interesting matter of various sorts; and though many of the lesser celebrities of whom she writes are no longer celebrated, and though much of their work has passed into the dust-bin of ephemeral literature, yet the story our old contributor has to tell is worth reading; and we are glad that in her old age she has succeeded

in placing before the world a book so pleasant and so attractive, and hope it will light up her remaining years with something like a fresh accession of literary popularity and prestige.

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

So the dreams depart,
So the fading phantoms flee,
And the sharp reality
Now must act its part.

WESTWOOD.

'I AM going to London by the early train. I'll be back to-morrow.'

'Why are you going? Oh, Mr Ludlow, don't go!'

'It's not to see Moore; you needn't be afraid. I'll give you my word not to go near him. Keep a brave heart, little Sage.'

'Are you going to see father?'

'No; I think not.'

'And you are quite, quite sure it is not *him* you are going to see?'

'Quite sure. It's some other business I have to go up about.'

Meanwhile, the business on which Mr Ludlow was bound was not apparently to be accomplished in London, for he went straight across to Victoria Station, and had soon turned his back on the great metropolis, and was hurrying along that line of railway which Sage had seen in its spring loveliness the day she had thought she was the happiest girl in the world.

Owen Ludlow, artist as he was, did not observe any of the beauties of the way; perhaps it was because it was a sullen, lowering day with thunder-clouds heaping themselves up in the west.

'Is Lady Lester at home?' he asked the dignified butler, who, with the assistance of two footmen, opened the door to him.

'Her ladyship is seriously ill, and does not see any one.'

Now Sage, he remembered, had told him she was ill; but he had not reckoned on her being too ill to see him.

'Can I see Miss Lester?'

'Not at home.'

And nothing remained but to tender his card and turn away, with a flat sort of feeling of having got up the steam for nothing, and nerved himself to do something he hated, and which must be done at once if it were to be done at all.

He left the regular carriage road to try a pleasant-looking short-cut down a glade, at the end of which the water glimmered cool and bright. And who should he meet as he went down the glade but Pomona herself, walking slowly towards the house, with such a radiance on her face and sweet light in her eyes as Ludlow had never seen since he wooed her mother in those golden days so long ago? Why should she have that look, walking alone under the August foliage? Had some wood-spirit been breathing love in her ear? some sylvan god wooing her?

But Ludlow had no time for wondering, or even for admiring, for he had to gather his purpose together, which had got strangely demoralised

since he turned his back on the house, and to silence those objections, which had gained new force since he had given ear to their voices.

She did not see him till she was close to him, and then she started as if she had been waking from a dream, and she coloured a warm, soft flush over face and neck, as if suddenly aware of a strange eye reading her inmost secrets; and her eyes sank, as if conscious of being too full of light and happiness to meet any other eyes but those that had looked into them last, and set that light and love shining by his burning look.

Owen Ludlow raised his hat, and she bowed, and was passing on, when he said, 'Miss Lester; and she turned courteously.

'It is Mr Ludlow. You must forgive me, but I did not recognise you. Have you been to the house?'

'Yes. I came to see Lady Lester on some business; but I am sorry to find she is not well.'

'She is very ill,' said Pomona. 'But will you not come back and rest? And perhaps you could tell me anything you wish to say to my mother, unless you would rather see Mr Hilton, the steward, if it is any business matter. I hope,' she added hastily, 'there is nothing wrong with Sage?—She is not ill?'

'No,' he answered; 'I do not think she is ill; but she has had an anxious time of nursing little Kitty, and she is not very bright.'

'But Kitty is better?'

'Oh yes, Kitty is getting well; but Sage has another trouble, and if you'll allow me, I will tell you about it.'

They had reached the house now, and she led the way through the garden and in by the garden door to the pretty morning-room where Sage had thought she would have been contented to sit all day; and she rang for tea, and entertained him in gracious, hospitable fashion, that made it more difficult every moment to begin the business on which he came.

The touch of fine-lady formality which had struck him at their last meeting seemed all to have gone; the slight frost had melted under the golden summer that was reigning in her heart; she had forgotten her dislike to the painter, which had never been very deeply seated, but which had been altogether washed away by the deluge of her love for one. Why! she would have taken the whole world into her arms just then, so beautiful, bright and happy a planet did it appear, and so big her all-embracing love.

Ludlow watched and listened to her with a sort of fascination. As Sage had said, the likeness to the picture, and so also to the original of the picture, was less striking the longer you were with her; and in Katharine there had never been so much of that bright, vivid fullness of life that was so remarkable in Pomona; so the resemblance ceased to jar on him, as it had done that evening in the studio.

But the matter could not be delayed longer, for Pomona was saying: 'I do not want to hurry you; but I always go up to my mother at seven, and you said you would tell me about Sage.'

And then he began. He had rehearsed the story over and over again in the watches of the night before and through the journey, for he had determined, if Lady Lester could not or would

not see him, to tell Pomona herself. But no rehearsing would make the story run smoothly, or make it appear the least as it had looked twenty years before at the Orchards with the apple blossom dropping softly all round.

He did not mention any names, but described the tall lady coming, and his final consent to her having the child.

'You let the baby go?'

'Yes.' It was Katharine's voice asking the question, and he answered guiltily, without offering any excuse.

'Did you ever see her again?'

'Not for twenty years.'

'And then?'

'I met her again.'

There was deep silence in the room, so deep, that a blossom falling on the pavement in the conservatory was distinctly audible, and the ticking of the tiny watch in the bracelet on Pomona's wrist.

He did not dare to look up at her, or to speak, though the silence seemed more than he could endure, and to be lasting for an eternity.

At last she said, with an odd, stiff sound in her voice, as if it were an effort to articulate the words: 'I understand you to mean that the tall lady was'—

'Lady Lester.'

'And the baby?'

'You were the little baby.—Pomona'—he turned towards her with a sudden emotion quivering in every limb and making his voice hoarse and unsteady.—'Pomona'—

But she held up her hand to silence him. 'Wait,' she said. 'I must try to understand. Have you any proof of this?'

'Ask Lady Lester.'

'That is just what I dare not do. She is so ill that the slightest agitation might kill her. I am thankful this miserable story did not reach my'— And then, with a sharp cry, as of bodily pain, she covered her face.—'If this story is true, she is not my mother!'

And then again, with a great effort, she composed herself, and went on: 'But there must be proof if it is true.'

'I have the letters; and if Lady Lester's maid, Martin, is still living, she knows the truth of the matter.'

'Martin too!' The girl wrung her hands together with a gesture of despair, that was so pitiful that Ludlow could almost have wished to declare his story a lie, if only to bring back the gladness into the girl's face.

'If this is true—mind, I only say if—I do not believe a word of it without proof; but if it is true, I am not Pomona Lester.'

He stretched out one hand to her in mute appeal; but she drew back almost with horror.

'I must have time to think it over,' she said. And then, with a poor, little attempt to reassume her usual gracious courtesy of manner: 'I do not mean to be impolite; but I must ask you to leave me to think over all this you have told me. You see, I have a good deal to think about, and I had better be alone. If you could come to-morrow morning, I should be more myself, and could hear anything you had to say further. If you have the letters you spoke of with you, perhaps you would let me see them.—Thanks.

I need not say I will take care of them; and if you can come to-morrow?'—

'Yes,' he said; 'I will be here any time that suits you. Shall it be ten?' And then, impulsively, he stretched out both hands to her. 'Pomona,' he said—'Pomona, if I can in any way make up to you—if a father's'—

'No,' she said, and her voice sounded cruelly cold and clear—'No, if this terrible thing is true, which God grant it is not! there never could be anything of father or daughter between us. When you gave your poor, little child away, I think that came to an end.'

And so they parted.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of love that never found his earthly close
What sequel? Streaming eyes and breaking hearts?
Or all the same as if it had not been?

TENNYSON.

It was a very hollow-eyed, changed Pomona who came down to meet Owen Ludlow next morning, and though yesterday you might have declared that most of her beauty consisted in the brilliant health and happiness in every line and tint, yet now, when the great eyes looked at you with dark circles of tearful watching round them, and the rose-tinted cheeks were white, and the lips wore a pitiful curve, she was no less beautiful; and there was a certain added dignity to her movements which perhaps had been hitherto too glad and girlish. And in the chill, gray dawn, she had had a piteous, heart-breaking interview with poor, old Martin, who had crept in while her lady slept, to see what this sudden headache could mean, and the scared look in her young mistress's face.

She had stoutly denied at first all knowledge of the thing, and had grown angry, and scolded, till Pomona's hopes began to rise, when suddenly this broken reed, on which she was beginning to lean, collapsed, and Martin was kneeling at her feet sobbing, and confessing that it was all true, but imploring her not to say a word to her mother, as it would kill her.

She had had to comfort and soothe the poor old woman, and assure her that nothing should come to Lady Lester to agitate and harm her; and then, when she was alone again, she read the letters through once more, by the cold reasonable light of early dawn, with no longer even any hope that there was any mistake or delusion about it; and tried to think calmly of the change this would make in the future.

One thing was certain: Beechfield was hers no longer; it never had been hers. It was Sage Merridew's. She drew back the curtain and opened the window and leaned out; the sun was just rising behind the great beech avenue, under the broad shadows of which the deer couched in the dewy grass; down below, the lawn was white with the heavy moisture, and the soft fragrance of dewy roses mounted from the terrace. How beautiful it was! Perhaps Pomona had never fully realised its beauty till now, when it was hers no longer.

But there was some comfort still. On the table by her side was a little glass containing the small bunch of forget-me-nots she had worn at her belt the day before. They had flagged and drooped, but, with the usual power of recovery

in that flower, had revived in water, and now were as fresh as ever, the little blue flowers showing among the leaves as simple and sweet as children's eyes.

When those flowers had been picked and given to her, some one had said: 'My beautiful Pomona, if I could only prove my love! If this terrible wealth of yours did not come between us!' This was the comfort. With Maurice Moore at any rate, it would make no difference; or if it did, it would be a difference on the right side. It was not Pomona Lester, the rich heiress, he loved; without Beechfield and all its wealth, she would still be his beautiful Pomona, rich only in his love.

And so, when she came down next morning to receive Owen Ludlow, though she was white and changed and hollow-eyed, she was not utterly prostrate; there was the little bunch of forget-me-nots in her belt, and a smile now and then on her grave lips and in her deep eyes.

Owen Ludlow had slept as little as she had; but wakeful nights and agitation do not leave so much mark in middle age as they do in youth, and he looked much the same as usual.

She handed the letters back to him as she entered the room, thereby avoiding the necessity of shaking hands as she bade him 'good-morning.'

'You have read them?' he asked.

'Yes; and I have also spoken to Martin. I fear there is little doubt of the truth of what you say.'

'I should not have spoken now'—he began.

But she stopped him. 'I am very glad you did. The terrible mistake has been not doing it sooner. I will not say a word of blame of my—Lady Lester; but a great wrong has been done Sage Merridew, and every day adds to it.'

'It was on her account I came.'

'Does she know?'

'Not a word, and she need never know; only I thought'—

'Of course she will know. Do you think I would go on a day longer than I can help, taking her proper place, spending her money, wearing her jewels?' And hardly conscious what she was doing, suiting the action to the word, Pomona drew off, one by one, the rings from her fingers and unfastened the bracelet on her wrist. 'But I dare not tell my mother. And I have been thinking—if you will tell Sage—that it cannot—cannot be very long now—if she would wait till—it cannot be very long, and it will all be hers then.'

The girl's voice shook and broke, and in the silence that followed, Ludlow said: 'I want you to let me tell you about Sage, and why I made up my mind to come and speak to you.'

She made a little gesture to him to go on; her voice was not quite enough under control to speak.

'A week ago I should not have come. She was happy then. I don't know if she has ever mentioned her engagement to you? For the past six months she has been engaged to a young friend of mine, and there seemed every prospect of her happiness, for I believe he was sincerely attached to her. But within the last few days he has written to put an end to the engagement, and it is simply on the score of want of means. Sage, as you know, has no money, and he has

only a small allowance from his father, and has been trying vainly to get some small appointment which would enable them to marry. He says, and he is quite right, that it will be for the happiness of neither to marry into poverty, and so he set her free, and she is just breaking her heart about it.

'Poor, little Sage!' Even in Pomona's great trouble she can pity Sage, as she lightly touches the flowers in her belt.

'I thought,' he went on, 'that if Lady Lester knew of this, she would not allow the child's happiness to be wrecked, and that, at anyrate, some share might be given her'—

'A share!' she interrupted, 'of what is all her own? But that will be all right now, but it cannot be quite directly. You will tell Sage, and she will tell him. There will be no need to part or break their hearts for want of means. Why did she not tell me about it? This—this friend of yours is, you say, sincerely attached to her?'

How strange women are! You never can reckon on them. There are so many unknown quantities to be taken into account in summing them up, and yet they have one thing in common, Ludlow thought—overpowering curiosity about love affairs. Who would have dreamed that, even in her great and evident distress of mind, Pomona should have cared to ask about Sage's lover? But then Ludlow did not know the meaning of that little bunch of forget-me-nots, or of the fellow-feeling that 'makes us wondrous kind.'

'Very sincerely. I am quite sure he feels this separation as much as she does, and nothing but the hopelessness of the engagement would ever have induced him to break it off.'

'You will tell her,' Pomona repeated, 'I would write to her myself, only I am much occupied with—Lady Lester. I am writing to-day to Mr Freestone, our—Lady Lester's solicitor, and I will ask him to arrange all the business matters as speedily as possible. Only, I am sure Sage will not press it while Lady Lester lives. It is only such a very, very short time to wait.'

She had risen as she spoke, as if to put an end to the interview; and he stood silent, looking at her, feeling miles away from her, utterly out of reach, helpless to comfort or advise, conscious that in the whole world he was the last she would turn to in her trouble. Father and daughter, and yet far apart as the Poles.

'Good-bye,' he said at last—'good-bye; and if ever'—

'Good-bye,' she interrupted quickly. 'You will tell Sage and your friend?'

'Yes,' he said; 'I will tell Sage and Maurice Moore.'

And then he turned to go out, but was stopped by a quick exclamation from Pomona.

'Who did you say? I beg your pardon. I did not quite hear.'

'Maurice Moore, my friend, to whom Sage has been engaged.—Good-bye.'

And then he went out, not knowing how his last words had given the cruellest stab of all to Pomona's heart.

'Is Miss Lester at home?' There was a glad assurance in the voice of the speaker, and a

forward movement, as if the answer were a matter of course, and there was no need of delay even to receive it.

But the man did not step aside to admit him, and the answer was so unexpected that Maurice Moore almost started on hearing it.

'Not at home.'

'Is she in the grounds?' Wondering to himself: 'Can I have missed her?—Had she come to meet me?'

'I think not, sir.'

'Is Lady Lester worse?'

'No; I believe her ladyship is much as usual.'

Maurice stared blankly at the man. What did it mean? But at that moment Pomona's maid came from the back of the hall, and Maurice's face brightened. A note? That was all right, and the first he had ever had from her; and he took the little packet and carried it away, to open when he got into that glade leading down to the water.

It did not take long to read. Inside there was a bunch of crushed forget-me-nots, and on the paper was written in Pomona's hand, 'For Sage Merridew.'

THE FLY COUNTRY.

In a private letter from one of the pioneers of the British South Africa Company, the following passage occurs: 'We are all to be mounted; and it is taking the horses to certain death; we shall ride through the Fly Country till they die, and then foot it.'

Now, what is meant by this Fly Country, and why should it be especially fatal to horses? are questions of great interest, for they are intimately associated with the past and future of the Dark Continent. The fly referred to is that known as the Tsetse fly, which is thus described by the traveller Baines: 'The tsetse is little more than half an inch long, and rather more slender than a common house-fly. The abdomen is marked with transverse stripes of yellow and dark chestnut, fading towards the centre of the back, so as to give the idea of a yellow stripe along it; the belly, livid white; the eyes are purplish brown; and the wings, of dusky, glassy brown colours, slip one over the other, just as do the blades of a pair of scissors when closed, so that the tsetse at rest on man or animal may infallibly be known by this one token. It has six legs, and tufts of hair over its body; its proboscis, or piercing apparatus, is about one-sixth of an inch long; its sight and smell seem to be keen; its flight straight and rapid.' Here we have the picture of the most formidable opponent to the advance of civilised man in Africa; for wherever the country is unexplored, so that the big game remain undisturbed, there this deadly fly bars the way to those necessary animals the ox, the horse, and the dog, and reduces man to a beast of burden; for although, in the interior, donkeys and mules are supposed to be impervious to tsetse poison, on the coast they also often succumb to the deadly fluid injected by 'the fly.'

Livingstone describes and figures the tsetse with its lancet-like proboscis much magnified.

He says: 'The poison does not seem to be injected by a sting, or by ova placed beneath the skin; for when the insect is allowed to feed freely on the hand, it inserts the middle prong, of three portions, into which the proboscis divides, somewhat deeply into the true skin. It then draws the prong out a little way, and it assumes a crimson colour as the mandibles come into brisk operation. The previously shrunken belly swells out; and if left undisturbed, the fly quietly departs when it is full. A slight itching irritation follows the bite.'

Wild animals and the goat feel no more serious effect from the sting than man, and even calves are exempt as long as they continue to suck the cows; but dogs cannot be protected by being fed on milk. The effect of the poison on oxen and horses is most curious; they do not die at once, and indeed the symptoms do not appear for some days; but then the nose and eyes begin to run, the coat gets rough, a swelling appears under the jaw, and emaciation commences, to be inevitably followed by death, although, perhaps, not for months, the effects of the poison being hastened, however, by rain and sudden changes of temperature. Singular, indeed, is the effect of the bite, or, as the Boers call it, the 'stick' of this fly; for the carcase when examined is found to be almost bloodless; the cellular tissue under the skin is distended with air, resembling a number of soap bubbles; the fat is yellowish-green and oily; the heart so soft that the fingers can be made to meet through it; the lungs and liver are diseased; the stomach and bowels are pale and empty; and the gall bladder is distended with bile. Yet, as Livingstone says, wild animals nearly akin to the horse and ox, such as the buffalo and zebra, suffer no harm; neither do pigs, goats, and wild antelopes; but dogs suffer as severely as horses and oxen. The skin of an animal which has died from the tsetse shows all the punctures on the inside, with a ring of yellow mucus on the flesh beneath each puncture as large as the palm of the hand, and resembling the appearance of a snake-bite.

No certain remedy is known for the puncture of this terrible fly; the native doctors smear their oxen with dung mixed with milk; this is supposed to prevent the attack of the fly, which has a strong dislike to the smell of excrement; but this anointing does not always avail. Inoculation has also been tried without effect; but it is said that to administer the fly itself mixed with herbs gives immunity. Baines says the animal thus treated suffers dreadfully, and is brought almost to death's door; but when it recovers, it is believed to be tsetse-proof. The natives also send the young calves into the Fly Country during the day, bringing them back to be suckled at night, and believe that this renders them safe from the fly afterwards. But the best remedy appears to be sponging the animal with ammonia, or perhaps with carbolic acid and water. This has been tried with good effect, as also a decoction of the bark of the roots of the Wittegaat boom (White-bark tree); and some Boers profess to cure animals recently 'stuck,' claiming an ox for each horse thus cured. Baines also speaks of a horse which was cured by 'Croft's Tincture,' the famous South African remedy for snake-bite; and also of two oxen saved by Perry

Davis's 'Pain-killer.' They stood for three or four days with foam running from their mouths, as if the poisonous matter were being thus ejected. After this they began to eat voraciously, and recovered their condition.

A very curious fact in connection with the tsetse is that it affects certain spots, and is wholly absent from others quite adjoining. Livingstone writes: 'We had come through another tsetse district by night, and at once passed our cattle over to the northern bank, which, though only fifty yards distant, was entirely free from the pest. This was the more singular that we often saw natives carrying over raw meat with many tsetse upon it.' Natives can sometimes lead cattle safely through a fly-infected country by knowing exactly the patches to which they are confined, and thus avoiding them; but, as these patches vary according to the distribution of the big game, their knowledge has to be recently acquired, or it cannot be depended upon.

As the tsetse invariably follows the big game, being known as 'the elephant fly,' it is driven always farther and farther into the interior by the advance of civilised man; but as ivory is one of the chief articles sought for by traders, it is evident that in order to obtain it they must also follow the game, and be subject to the attacks of 'the fly,' and this, from time immemorial, has been one of the chief causes of the slave-trade; for the ox and the horse being unattainable as beasts of burden, traders have seized upon the negro, and having purchased him as well as the ivory from the chieftain in possession of both, have compelled the slave to convey the ivory to the coast, where the bearer as well as the burden becomes valuable property. But as ivory becomes scarcer and more valuable year by year, it will, in spite of philanthropists, be more and more sought after; and if the slave-trade is to be effectually put a stop to, some mode of transport must be found which cannot be affected by the tsetse. The best of all is, of course, the 'iron horse,' which is capable of carrying heavy burdens without entailing suffering upon man or beast; but although a good beginning has already been made, and the Beira Railway has rendered approach to the interior practicable from that part of the coast, it must be many years before railways can advance into the heart of Africa, and meanwhile some beast of burden impervious to the tsetse ought to be found. Many have suggested the African elephant or the zebra; but no serious attempt seems to have been made to tame either for the purpose. Donkeys could hardly be taken in sufficient numbers, even if impervious to the fly, which seems doubtful; but the stout mule so frequently seen in Southern Europe might be employed advantageously. The Indian elephant and the buffalo might also be tried. It would, however, be better still could some medicament be found to render the ox and the horse available, for they are always attainable near the various ports, and would be far less costly than native carriers (not slaves), who have now to be hired to convey goods through the Fly Country, and who frequently refuse the task, or forsake the traveller just when most needed, and who, moreover, can only carry about fifty pounds each on a long march, thus rendering a great cavalcade necessary,

and making the cost of transport at least fourteen pounds a ton.

In the meantime the tsetse reigns, and, ludicrous as it sounds, affords protection to the lordly elephant, and opposes its tiny though formidable lancet—more deadly, and less easily avoided than the poisoned arrow of the Pigmy and the assegai of the Kaffir—to the advance of the white man, who dreads this insect foe as much as the malarial fevers which so often prostrate him in the swamps and marshes; for, besides rendering transport difficult and costly, it places him at the mercy of the savage negro chieftains of the interior, who, by refusing to provide carriers, can render his journey abortive.

Thus indirectly the tsetse fly may be regarded as the ruler of the Dark Continent, although, happily, his power is waning, for when pioneers have done their work, and received the fiercest of the onslaught, the elephant and other big game retreat to more secure quarters, whither the fly follows, to be again encountered with certain loss by the progressive white man, but to be eventually exterminated, together with the big game with which it is inseparably associated.

LESS THAN KIN.

CHAPTER IV.

THE unexpected shock of Dick Russell's sudden arrival seemed, in some inexplicable way, to put a new complexion upon the rather complicated state of affairs at Denleigh vicarage. As to the cruel and malicious charge made by Joseph Wakelin, that assumed a quite cheerful aspect when this young, strong fellow, with his infectious laugh and happy eyes, had listened to the narrative given by his mother's lips, and then had torn all her fears to shreds, through the remnants of which more sun than shadow was visible.

'You were rather unwise, were you not, ever to let him hear of the loss? Happily, however, one gold piece is uncommonly like another, and I've quite a little sackful up in my port-manteau.'

'But, my dearest son, do you suppose we will rob you?' exclaimed Mildred, her eyes filling. 'If you've been economical enough to save out of your salary, it is yourself who should benefit.'

'So I intend,' he rejoined. 'And to settle old Wakelin's mind is the first of my many advantages. Why, mother, you never thought me selfish enough to be spending all my screw, did you? Only I had a fancy for bringing home a lump, instead of sending dribblets. Of course it is all yours and father's. Don't disappoint me by making a fuss now!'

'At any rate, my boy, we will gladly accept this sum as a loan, until my unfortunate memory reveals what I did with the original amount.'

'Then you don't believe it was stolen?'—in some surprise.

'No; I don't. The more I think about it, the more convinced do I become that I must have put it somewhere for safety. Only the question still remains, where?'

Thus the difficulty was, for the moment, solved. The pupil teachers and the National

Society were paid. And though, owing to Mr Wakelin's fostering care, the story of the loss spread about the parish, and was repeated with surmises and remarks which, had they come to Dick's ears, might have proved detrimental to the peace of the community, the matter was, outwardly at any rate, smoothed over and forgotten.

In regard to the change in Ena's position, however, all was not such plain sailing. For twenty years had these two young folks been taught to regard each other as brother and sister; and if the surprise caused by Sir George's will and the news of Ena's real parentage had come without any preceding interruption to their intercourse, probably the old relationship would scarcely have been disturbed. Such, however, had not been the case.

To Ena, indeed, Dick seemed the same Dick as of yore, only a little older, a trifle more sedate, and a good deal less boisterous and condescending. Also foreign travel appeared to have had upon him the unusual effect of bringing out a tendency to bashfulness unnoticed in earlier youth.

But with the man, matters were far otherwise. When he quitted home, he left behind him a child playfellow, with long flowing hair, and ankles quite plainly to be beheld below her dresses; a child who had been the sharer of his boyish scrapes, the innocent admirer of his wildest escapades, and the sympathising recipient of his university confidence. As a child she had still lingered in his memory during the years of absence; and certainly he would have been less startled to find the same romping, undeveloped girl awaiting his return, than he was at receiving the greeting of a pretty, well-dressed, but quite grown-up young lady. This was not the Ena that he remembered, but altogether a transformed and more impressive personage. And so great was the alteration in herself, that it scarcely occurred to him as extraordinary that her standing towards himself should be different also, and that, in fact, as well as fancy, he had lost his sister Ena for ever.

At first, a sort of shyness fell upon him. When, morning and evening, Ena lifted her face for his kiss of greeting, he blushed; and though he always gave the required caress, he was sensible that perhaps it might have been better to have refrained—a notion which never crossed Ena's brain. But gradually the shyness, though it did not altogether leave him, gathered about itself another and more pleasant sensation. As the days wore on, Dick found that the blank in his life caused by the loss of a sister was becoming more than filled. He discovered that his plans were in some sort governed by Ena's arrangements, and that the thought of her was apt to exercise an influence upon his movements. Last of all, he arrived at the sage conclusion that he must always have had an instinctive realisation that he was not her brother, and that he was extremely glad that the truth regarding her had at length been proclaimed to the world at large. If only they could still keep her to themselves! Yet that was exactly where the hardship lay, that just as she had acquired a new interest and value in his eyes—a value quite unconnected with gold or silver—she must be carried off to make fresh acquaintances, possibly to be inveigled

into a disregard of older and more familiar friends.

'I hate the idea of your going amongst strangers and forgetting all about us,' he exclaimed moodily on the evening before Marmaduke's expected arrival. Mrs Daintry had already written to Mrs Russell, expressing the hope that Ena might travel to Rushton under her son's escort; and Mildred had not seen her way to refuse so natural and proper an invitation. Therefore this was Ena's last night, at least for a while, in the house which from her infancy had been her home.

It was one of those warm, summer-like evenings that sometimes render May such a charming month. The sun was setting behind the houses opposite, and shooting great red rays of glory all athwart the sky. The whole air seemed full of the fading crimson light, which fell upon Dick's dark head, gilding it to bronze; whilst it reflected itself in the brightness of the girl's gray eyes as she stood by the drawing-room window and looked out upon the strip of town garden beyond.

'As though I could ever forget,' she said, soberly and with a quiver in her voice. 'What opinion must you have of me even to say such a thing, Dick?'

He laughed a little. 'It wouldn't be easy to tell you exactly what opinion I have had and still have of you,' he said. 'When I was away, Ena, never a day but the remembrance of you was with me, keeping me, I do believe, very earnestly, from much evil. At that time you used to seem like the child-sister I had left behind.' He paused, finding, apparently, some difficulty in continuing. But she was not looking at him, and therefore did not observe the flush that had crept over his face.

'And now all that will be altered,' she said. 'I'm not your sister! And you'll get to love Bijou more than me; and I shan't come and keep house for you in your curacy; and— Oh, it's perfectly horrid!' With which final outburst of harassed petulance she covered her face with her hands and began to cry, much to the disturbance of her companion.

'Don't, dear, don't!' he implored. 'Ena, you understand just as well as I do that I shall never, never care for that silly Bijou as I do for you.'

The assurance went far to rally her spirits. Truth to tell, Ena was by no means a perfect character, whatever one benighted mortal might consider her. And since she had received the unwelcome tidings of her own rightful place in the world, and consequent loss of all those relationships which had hitherto constituted so great a part of her happiness, there had sprung up in her heart a little, unacknowledged jealousy of Bijou, whose position in the home and household of course remained as of old. Now, therefore, though she did not withdraw her fingers, the voice from behind them sounded almost cheerful as she uttered one word of reply: 'Really?'

'Really and positively. Don't you think,' half timidly, 'that a friend can be quite as nice as a sister, Ena?'

A search which she had been for some seconds diligently conducting in her pocket, here terminated in the distressing discovery that her hand-

kerchief was missing, an idea which entirely drove away all others.

'I wish you'd lend me your handkerchief,' she murmured in the most lugubrious tone. 'I can't imagine what has become of mine.'

That was irresistible to Dick, who was himself as perfectly aware as the lady was absolutely unconscious, that he had been trying his 'prentice hand at love-making. To have his affectionate protestations nipped thus in the bud would have been annoying, had it not been so utterly comic. With a hearty laugh he produced the desired implement. 'Happily, it's a clean one,' he said. 'Ena, you're very little changed, after all! Even governessing hasn't made you prim! Pray, how often used you to have to borrow these articles of your pupils?'

'About once a week,' diligently mopping. 'But they had loads; so, what did it matter? Oh Dick, how hateful of you to have made me cry. It has spoilt all my beauty!'

'Has it?' looking into the flushed countenance and shining eyes.

But the thread of conversation was broken, and he could not take it up where it had been dropped. Besides, Mrs Russell at that moment entered, full of instructions as to the packing. Therefore, when Marmaduke Daintry next day carried off his cousin, pouring showers of information the while upon her devoted and bewildered brain, Ena went in ignorance as to all that Dick had desired to convey, and, indeed, with even a little soreness in her innocent heart that, at parting, when she said good-bye to him, he had not kissed her as usual.

Rushton House was a large and handsome building, of a type very different from the spacious but tasteless dwellings of Mr Wakelin and his brother magnates at Denleigh. The ancient gray walls frowned down upon a garden where old-fashioned flowers were allowed to bloom luxuriantly, and where carpet bedding was mainly conspicuous by its absence. But as the victoria, which had been sent to the station to meet Sir Marmaduke and Ena, bowled quickly along and drew up at the hospitably open door, the breeze came to her laden with the scent of early roses and fragrant lilies of the valley.

'What a grand old place!' she exclaimed, in honest admiration. For a wonder, there had been a momentary pause in the Baronet's stream of talk.

'Awfully jolly, don't you know? A little ramshackle and all that. But money will soon put it to rights. Sir George would never spend anything, but scraped and hoarded in the queerest fashion. Don't intend to go in for that sort of stinginess myself. However, recollecting that here was a fine opening for a compliment, 'he had so lovely an object for whom to hoard and save, that now I wonder much less than I used at his odd ways.'

'Do you mean me?' with a slight stare of astonishment. 'It's very kind of you to say such nice things. But as Sir George had never even seen me, why?— And she wound up with a quizzical laugh just as the horses came to a stand-still.

In the hall, a tall, rather stately woman was awaiting with some eagerness the new-comer.

Hers had been a sorrowful life, and its troubles had drawn deep lines upon the high forehead and round the once rosy mouth. Married very young to a man for whom she had no love, Cordelia Daintry had been left a widow with two little sons before reaching her twenty-fifth year. Of these boys, her heart had fixed itself upon the younger, and him she watched droop and die in his childhood. The elder lad was at that time at a school, selected by his grandfather—upon whom they were all entirely dependent—solely on account of its cheapness. Here, amongst rough boys, of far inferior rank to his own, the future Baronet was educated, in spite of his mother's remonstrances. Flattered by the masters on account of his prospects, bullied by the boys because of his lack of pocket-money and hampers, Marmaduke grew year by year more unmanageable and less attractive. No persuasions on the part of his daughter-in-law could induce Sir George to incur the expense of a university education for his heir. Nor, indeed, did the youth, who preferred complete idleness, desire it for himself. And Cordelia had the mortification of seeing in her son, upon his entrance into such society as the neighbourhood afforded, a vulgar, underbred representative of a once fine race.

To his marriage she now looked forward as the one hope of saving him from the consequences of past years. If he could but meet with some sweet, gentle girl, whose soft voice and winning ways might have a softening influence upon his coarse manners, and whose money might enrich the estate, impoverished by Sir George's will, Mrs Daintry's ambition would, so far as it yet survived, be satisfied. And as Marmaduke had, upon the first blush of the affair, loudly announced his intention of 'making up to the little impostor' named by his grandfather as so large a legatee, the lady's anxiety to behold Ena may be better imagined than described. It was an anxiety very speedily set at rest, for the worn, rather tired face and the wistful look that crept into her hostess's eyes as she held out her hand in welcome, touched Ena's warm heart. The girl lifted her face and kissed her aunt.

'My dear, I hope you have had a pleasant journey?' It was the customary inquiry, but made in so refined and musical a voice that Ena almost started. Why, oh, why did the son bear no nearer a resemblance to the mother?

'Very, thank you. The'—

'Well, Ena may have enjoyed it. But as to me, I'm downright famished. Thought perhaps they'd have offered one a glass of beer or something at the vicarage; but no such luck.'

Mrs Daintry saw Ena's colour rise.

'I am sorry that you were not in time for luncheon,' the girl exclaimed; 'but I fancied that I heard my mother ask you'—

'Mother! She's no mother of yours! Just look here, Ena; the best thing you can do now is to drop all that rot, don't you know? Old Russell and his wife'—

But even his rattling tongue was silenced there, as his cousin, to whom he was handing a cup of tea, prepared by Mrs Daintry, waved it on one side and stood up. 'Sir Marmaduke, you had better understand something once for all,' she said. 'Mr and Mrs Russell have been more than parents to me during the years when your grand-

father would have left me, as he left my mother, to starve. The next slighting word that you utter against them will compel me to leave your house and to consider yourself from henceforth as a stranger. Thank you,' reseating herself, and accepting the cup he still held. 'Yes, cream; but no sugar, please.'

Not another word passed upon the subject, for Mrs Daintry was too wise to undertake an apology, and her son was actually cowed. But Ena had fought her battle, and her sense of love and gratitude were not again wounded.

Blind as Sir George's grand-daughter had proved to Dick's earliest attempts at winning her, she was quite unable to close her eyes to the persistent efforts of her next suitor. That Sir Marmaduke destined her to occupy the honourable and coveted position of a Baronet's wife had become, within twenty-four hours of her arrival at Rush-ton, as obvious to herself as to the rest of the world. Nor was he one likely to show himself a laggard in wooing or in explaining his wishes, which, within a week, he did in fact accomplish. Certainly, considered as that of a lover, Sir Marmaduke's method might be pronounced unique. The opportunity which he selected to make Ena acquainted with the glory in store for her was one afforded by Mrs Daintry's absence upon a shopping expedition, from which a headache had detained Ena. Later in the day, however, the cool breeze tempted her out, and she started to walk down the avenue to the park gates, where she might probably wait for the returning carriage and drive back with her aunt to the house. But circumstances were too strong for her. She had not accomplished half the distance, when she encountered her cousin, who forthwith announced his intention of accompanying her, and then and there proceeded to expound his views of their future.

'So glad to see that you and the old lady take to each other,' was his first, happily worded, remark. 'She's awfully fond of you, Ena. Thinks you altogether out of the ruck, not in the least one of the common or garden sort!'

'Very good of her!' with an uncontrollable little burst of laughter.

'Oh, not at all, not at all! Any one can see that you were well born, and all that, don't you know? And the mater thinks so much of blood and good breeding, that otherwise things mightn't have been pleasant. Never do for you two, living in one house as you'll have to do, not to agree. She has the right to remain here always.'

'So she ought to have,' indignantly.

'But some girls wouldn't say so. I declare I was struck all of a heap, don't you know? at one time, fancying what battles there might be between her and my wife. But now that's settled comfortably for all parties.'

'Indeed? Allow me to congratulate you. I was not aware of any engagement.' She spoke half in mischief, half with the intention of showing the complete futility of his hopes. Anything would be better than to allow him to indulge in the impracticable dreams which she and her wealth—especially the latter—had induced, though to listen to a formal declaration of his passion was not an occupation which Ena

desired. Sir Marmaduke, however, quickly rose to the bait.

'Oh, come now, Ena,' with a laugh. 'Where's the use of coyness between you and me? The whole county is talking about the way we stand to each other, though I've never actually told you in so many words that I wanted you. There! confess now that you ain't so ignorant as you pretend!'

She flushed all over her face at his boldness. It seemed to her little short of an insult thus to have taken her consent for granted. 'Pardon me. Whatever may be my ignorance, of one thing I am very certain—I shall never be your wife.'

But he only laughed the more loudly. 'Nonsense, my dear. You don't mean to tell me that you're one of the sort that would rob a man of half the fortune that properly belongs to him, and give it to some other chap? Got you there, eh, Ena?'

The sound of advancing wheels told her of speedy interruption and deliverance; yet, ere that happened, she desired to guard against any repetition of such an interview. 'Here's the carriage coming,' she exclaimed, standing still and facing him. 'But before it reaches us, let me be quite plain and frank with you. Believe me, it is best. Nothing that you can say or do, no taunt and no inducement, will ever make me marry you. Please accept this as my final answer.'

For a second or two he stared at her, all the jocularity dying out of his countenance, and a ferocious anger taking its place. At last, very slowly, he turned away. 'Then I'll be seeing after some one else,' he remarked, 'and the sooner you're off these premises the better. I was a fool, or I'd have taken in what all that talk about brother Dick meant! Fancy preferring a parson to a Baronet!'

But by that time Ena was seated in the victoria, offering pretty welcomings to Mrs Daintry, who, upon her side, found it extremely pleasant to be thus petted and made much of by a fair girl who might some day be to her as a daughter. Not the less, however, was Ena's mind fully made up upon the necessity for quitting Rushton House with all decent haste.

With regard to the broad hint concerning Dick, she thrust it out of her memory for the moment, though she did not as yet fully realise to what it had opened her own eyes. She instinctively comprehended that it was one of those matters that must be considered in solitude and quiet. For it had brought her heart and her brain face to face.

That evening, as Mr Russell returned homewards after a long afternoon of visiting in the poorest parts of his parish, he paused to pat on the head a little, curly-haired youngster of about seven years old. The boy looked up at him slyly from under his long eyelashes, the pale, unchildlike features lighting up the while with some feeling at which the vicar did not guess.

'Do you know me, my lad? Are you one of the Sunday-school boys?' he asked kindly.

'Not o' yourn noo. Feyther, 'e 'on't let me goo no more theer. I'm to goo t' Methodists,

coom Soonday. 'E says as thee stole some mooney, and as I shall larn that sort o' thing quick eno' wi'oot trooblin' passon for't.'

Mr Russell's caressing hand fell limply at his side. So, whilst he had been content to fancy the whole trouble at an end, the scandal had been growing day by day, until it had reached a pitch when a child dared fling it in his teeth! No wonder that Mildred started at the sight of the drawn visage that encountered her gaze when, as usual, she went to the door to admit her husband, or that they sat together far into the night over the study fire—the evening had closed in chill and foggy—discussing the terrible little narrative.

'I can see nothing for it but a prosecution for libel against Wakelin,' exclaimed Charles, as at last they wearily rose. 'And I hate to go to law with one of my people.'

'Yet it is for the sake of your people that you must clear your name,' urged Mildred, almost timidly. 'For their sake as much as for our own and our children's.'

'Clear my name! Even the heaviest damages would scarcely do that now. A clergyman's reputation must be above suspicion. To think that my parishioners, after all these years, can believe such evil of me! It breaks my heart.'

YARMOUTH BLOATERS AND RED HERRINGS.

To the herring, for which Yarmouth is so famous, the town owed its first inhabitants. Its site was originally a sandbank in the sea, and was buried beneath the waves until some time in the fifth century, when it began to lift its head above the water. As soon as it had become completely emancipated, the fishermen who resorted to the neighbourhood in pursuit of the shoals of herring, found it was a convenient spot on which to dry their nets. They next erected on it tents and other temporary shelters for the accommodation of themselves and of the merchants who came to them from London, Norwich, and other populous centres. As the advantages of the site as a fishing station became more and more apparent, the temporary structures gave place to dwellings and sheds of a permanent character.

For the Yarmouth boats nowadays the herring-fishery begins soon after midsummer, and lasts for some eighteen or twenty weeks. At the beginning of the season the boats go into the North Sea and meet the shoals off Scarborough and Grimsby. Very gradually the fish make their way southwards; and the Yarmouth men keep with them until they have passed the little town of Southwold, on the Suffolk coast. In October the fish are off Yarmouth, and are then in their prime. As if anxious to be taken at their best, they come quite close to the beach, so that small shore-boats are able to take part in their capture. These boats are manned by three men, and carry nets which reach a total length of half a mile.

The regular fishing-boats carry nine or ten men and a boy, according to the size of the vessel. If all the space below deck was devoted to the accommodation of the crew, the amount that

could be allotted to each individual would appear to a landsman as most uncomfortably circumscribed. But the hold has to contain the fishing-gear and the fish as well as the men, and consequently the captors are packed about as closely together as their captives. The long hours of arduous toil are unrelieved by anything approaching comfort in bed or at board. There, to quote the forcible words of one of the men, 'it is hog-lying and hog-feeding.'

About one hundred and forty fishing-boats are registered as belonging to Yarmouth; and the neighbouring port of Lowestoft, which, so far as the herring-fishery is concerned, is another Yarmouth, has a like number. Each of these boats, when new and fully furnished with fishing-gear, costs some thirteen hundred pounds. The herring-nets, which, by the way, are generally of Continental make, are twenty-two yards long by eight or nine broad, and cost thirty shillings each. As a boat carries from one hundred and sixty to two hundred nets, it is evident that their total loss—a by no means unfrequent occurrence—is a very serious matter. At Yarmouth, the crew make good any damage to the nets up to a maximum of ten pounds, any loss beyond that falling upon the owner. But at Lowestoft a different custom prevails; there the whole of the loss has to be borne by the men.

A few years ago, the dog-fish, a kind of shark, wrought havoc among the nets, tearing and even eating them in its voracious attack on the herrings fast in the meshes. This pest is now rarely met with. The cod will lay heavy toll on the ensnared herrings, but it does not greatly injure the nets. The loss of nets is now chiefly occasioned by sudden storms, by trawlers, and by excessive catches of fish. If the nets become overlaid with fish, they sink, and are irrecoverable. Barring such untoward accidents, the nets will last for four or five years, and can be gradually replaced. Three or four times during the season they are brought ashore to be retanned, which is done by dipping them into a dark-coloured liquid. When in use they are spliced along one side to a rope, and, being placed end to end, form, from each boat, a snare two miles or more in length. The whole is floated by corks and small barrels. Off Yarmouth the nets are kept near the surface of the water; but in the North Sea they are suspended at a varying depth, determined by the brightness of the moon. Sometimes they are so far down that the lower edge touches the ground.

The nets are 'shot' about three o'clock in the afternoon; at about seven the nearest net is examined. If there are not more than a couple of hundred fish in it, it is let down again, after being emptied, and the work of hauling-in is postponed for two or three hours. Steam is now generally employed to turn the capstan by which the nets are brought on board, thus saving time and relieving the men of a task which cruelly taxed their strength. As it is, they are still severely tried.

As the fish are taken from the nets, they are cast into the hold and salted, layers of fish and layers of salt alternating. A ton of salt is allowed to each 'last' of fish. Last is a numerical term. It nominally means ten thousand; but in practice it signifies thirteen thousand two hundred, for, according to the peculiar

computation of the fishers, one hundred and thirty-two herrings are counted as one hundred. The ordinary fishing-boats will hold from twenty to twenty-five lasts, and are sometimes filled by one cast of the nets. On such occasions, the men have to work continuously for twenty hours; for, if the hauling-in begins at seven o'clock in the evening, the last net will not be cleared before three or four in the following afternoon; and until that is done, no rest is possible. When the catch is not more than three or four lasts, the boat generally stays at sea for another night.

The fish are taken to the nearest port; but wherever caught or cured, the prestige of Yarmouth is thrown over them; they are all sold as Yarmouth bloaters or red herrings. Even the large, coarse, Norwegian herring is made to share this distinction, much, one would think, to the detriment of the character of the genuine article.

The landing-place for the fish taken to Yarmouth is on the left bank of the Yare, quite away from the sandy beach and the holiday-makers. The wharf is laid with neat granite cubes, and is forty feet wide. For the convenience of the buyers and sellers, there is, adjoining the wharf, a building seven hundred and fifty feet in length and forty feet wide, erected at a cost exceeding twenty thousand pounds. Here may be witnessed, during the herring season, some very exciting and interesting scenes; for, when big catches have been made, as many as two thousand lasts are sometimes landed in twenty-four hours.

The fish are removed from the hold by hand, and a whole day is occupied in clearing a boat that has a full cargo. The combined effect of the pressure to which the lower portion is subjected and of the salt with which the fish are mixed, is to convert the greater portion of the contents of the hold into a solid rock-like mass, which cruelly lacerates the hands of those who, from any cause, do not follow the usual practice of wearing mittens while unloading.

The salted fish are taken from the boats to the premises of the curers, where women at once wash them well in huge tubs. Other women then thread them through the gills on rounded sticks, each holding about twenty-five herrings. By means of these sticks they are suspended in the smoke in which they are dried. The smoke which gives the most delicate flavour is produced by the burning of oak in the form of billets, shavings, and sawdust; but rubbish and chemicals are too frequently employed. The combustion takes place on the bare floor of the curing-house, a lofty building, with its upper portion divided by louvres, arranged parallel to each other at such a distance apart that a man can just straddle across the intervening space, and extending from the roof to about seven feet from the floor. On one pair of the lowest beams stands a man to place on the louvres within his reach the ends of the rods filled with fish as they are handed to him by a woman, or to pass them on to a companion standing above him, over whose head stands a third man to fill the uppermost part. The rods are placed about three inches apart, the space in every direction being just sufficient to prevent the fish from touching each other. Sometimes the workers become almost as smoke-

dried as the fish, for their task is pursued regardless of the condition of the fires.

The herrings are all alike when they go into the curing-house, and are differentiated by the length of time they are in the smoke. Those which are removed after an exposure of an hour or two are of a light colour, and are the 'bloaters' of the fish-shops. They are preferred by Londoners, and are the most profitable to the curers. The longer the fish remain in the smoke the darker they become, and they are finally known as 'red herrings' or 'black herrings,' according to the stage at which the curing ceased. At the other end of the scale are the white herrings. They are the fish just as they are drawn from the sea, and can only be brought in when but a short time will elapse between their capture and their being landed. Well-cured herrings will 'keep' until the following season. The red herrings form the majority of those that are cured. The black herrings are largely exported to Roman Catholic countries.

As the remuneration of the fishermen depends upon the value of the fish they take, it goes without saying that their earnings are uncertain and extremely fluctuating. A catch which fills a boat to its utmost capacity may not be worth so much to the crew as one less than a quarter as great. The quantity of fish that one day would readily fetch twenty pounds, might on another, when the market was glutted, be with difficulty disposed of for a tenth of that sum. The season of 1892 was a good one. Hardly a boat took less than a thousand pounds' worth of fish, while the earnings of many mounted up to thirteen or fourteen hundred pounds. Of the gross sum received, some three or four hundred pounds would be required to meet expenses. The owners of the most successful boats would receive six or seven hundred pounds, and the remainder would be divided among the respective crews.

Not a great sum is it, then, that the hardy herring-fishers earn for themselves by the best part of half a year's toil—toil that, they say, is at times 'harder than any harvest-work'—toil that is ever attended by discomfort and oftentimes by danger. The sea does not allow them to reap their portion of its harvest without exacting such toll as gives fresh occasion for prayers for 'the fatherless and widows.' It is not only the 'caller herrin' that are drawn from the Firth of Forth that may be called the 'lives o' men.'

THE WINNING OF PADDON MANOR.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

I FOUND Bickford seated on a bench in the yard where the prisoners walked, with a mug of ale and a pipe, looking by no means downcast.

'What cheer, Jack?' I said. 'So you've let them catch you at last.'

'Don't ee be veared vor me, Joe,' he answered, puffing at his pipe. 'Bain't no want of money vor liars' (meaning lawyers).

'Ay, Jack,' I said, 'maybe, for this job; but there's worse, and more of it, to come. Concerning fishing, I mean, not smuggling.'

'How do ee mean, vishin'?' he said.

'Did ever you catch aught but fish?' I said

—'horses, or the like. Alas, Jack, Botany Bay is your port without a doubt, and your wife and children on the parish.'

The pipe dropped out of his mouth and shivered on the stones, while he stared at me, with his eyes as round and his face near as white as a barn owl's.

'All is out, Jack,' I went on. 'My uncle Westcott has confessed it in my presence. Down it is in black and white, with two magistrates witnessing it, and throwing most of the blame on you. Fourteen years' transportation is the least you can expect; and I almost fear that it may come to hanging. But it is sad to see a respectable man of your age, with a large family, about to be taken from them, to wear chains, and eat rotten biscuit, and be flogged once a week for the rest of his life.'

I almost thought that he would, being a stout man, have fallen down in a fit; but when he found his voice, he used it to some purpose.

'The ould roag!' he shouted, with many words which I omit. 'Why, 'twas his plannin', vast an' last, an' I did no more than haul ropes.'

'Good pay for hauling ropes, Jack,' I said. —'But come this way,' for the others came crowding round us. 'There is one chance, and that I am come to give you, entirely out of friendship, for you would not have known till too late. I will write down now, as you shall tell me, how it happened, and how an honest sailor was led into doing such wickedness, thinking it but a joke. Then you shall sign it; and the head-turnkey, or who you will, shall witness your signature; and I will take it post haste to Squire Rendell, who as yet knows nothing; and with a proper use of your family in court, you may see them again in five years.'

Now, all this would not have gone down even with an ignorant man like Bickford, but that the thing came so suddenly upon him. However, I gave him no time to think, but brought him to the room where the lawyers saw their clients, and wrote as fast as I could, whilst a man, cast for sheep-stealing, sat and groaned very dismally.

What it came to was pretty much what I had guessed. The night before the trial of swimming was to be made, my uncle and Bickford, being bribed by Squire Hilliard, had laid down fifty fathoms of a strong ground-seine, made fast that the upper edge was a yard under water. A gap was left in it of two fathoms, marked by the corks of crab-pots, to guide Squire Hilliard's course. If the net should be discovered, it would pass for one left by accident by Paignton fishermen; but the devil helping them, all went well, and they took care to remove it from the drowned horse, as my uncle had said in his sleep. I asked if the gentlemen in the boat perceived nothing; but he said that, what with drinking of healths the night before and the rocking of the boat, their heads were of little use to them.

So I buttoned up the paper in my breast-pocket, duly signed and attested, and left him, congratulating him on the ease he must now feel in his mind, of which, however, no signs appeared in his countenance. I promised myself much sport, when I should make known to Uncle Westcott how basely he had betrayed his mate and employer. But as I returned on the coach

next morning, who should pass us but the very man himself, in our spring-cart, with a boy driving him. When I got home, Kate told me that he had come over in a mighty fluster, and begged the loan of the cart to take him to Exeter upon most important business.

About noon the next day my uncle came back in the cart, but in a sad plight, having two fine black eyes, and his face bound up in a handkerchief.

'Uncle,' I said very seriously, as I assisted him down, 'it is quite time for you to leave off these rackets. You will be up for manslaughter one day, with this fighting.'

He only grunted at this, and I led him into the parlour and set a glass of grog before him.

'Vightin'!' he groaned—'much vightin' I done; 'twas Jack Bickford. Her've gone clane mad, vor I cudn' spake a word avore her got me vast by the nose an' most pulled it off my vace, an' banged me about most cruel, carlin' o' me all the old rogues an' betrayin' devils.'

But here I could contain myself no longer, and, falling into a chair, I laughed till the people in the street stopped to listen.

'Be'ee mad too, Joe?' snuffled my uncle through the handkerchief.

'Never less,' I said. 'But surely you must have been, to go near him. That ever my mother's brother should be the man to do such a thing! What made you inform on him and yourself?'

'Never a word have I spoke consarnin' his doin's!' he said.

'Nor about the nice little trap you laid for Squire Rendell,' I said—'the swimming match, and the seine-net, and the rest?' And here my uncle slipped off his chair, and lay on the floor in a dead faint.

He was carried up-stairs and put to bed; but the shock was almost too much for him, and, falling into a fever, he became light-headed, and put us to no small trouble. For my part, I felt no pity for him; for though I had lost some scruples in the Indies, this was altogether beyond me.

But now it was time for me to call on Squire Rendell with my budget of news. Accordingly, I hired a good horse, and in my best clothes rode up the street like any dragoon, whilst the boys shouted to each other, 'Zee zailor capten a horseback;' and passing the 'World,' old Hawke had the impudence to tell me 'to keep a grip o' the rigging.' So I came out on the Ashburton road, and a pleasant one it was, between hills, red and green, like a Highlandman's plaid, with pasture and corn-fields, and the July sunshine on the dog-rose and traveller's joy in the hedges, and the gray tors of Dartmoor in the north-west; but most of all with the sense of being on a good errand which was likely to bring profit.

When I saw the church tower of Ashburton between the two hills, I inquired of a labouring man for Darleigh, and turning in at a gate he showed me, I was presently in front of the house. It was not so large or fine as Paddon, having been built in Queen Elizabeth's time by the first Squire Rendell; but it was well enough, with a terrace before it, and stone vases thereon, and a

peacock spreading his tail on one, reminding me of India. As I sighted it, a man with two dogs following came out of the hall door and down the road towards me; and as he approached, I knew Squire Rendell, a fine and hearty young man, looking thoroughly generous and liberal, but graver than a man should look at less than thirty, with a good estate and married for love.

'Joseph Smerdon, sir,' I said, dismounting, 'come over from Newton to speak with your honour.'

'Ah!' said he, 'the new landlord of the "Bull." I have heard of your luck in getting to a safe port after shipwreck.'

'It is too soon yet to boast, sir,' I said. 'That is for time to show. But I think your honour has been even luckier than I, for when I last saw you, the doctor of your regiment had almost given you up.'

'What!' he said; 'were you there? I remember a tall sailor, who brought me water.'

'That was I, sir,' I said. 'You remember that I wore a Dutchman's hat, having lost my own in the ditch.'

'So you did,' he replied. 'Well, I am truly glad to see you, and we have both much to be thankful for. Is there anything in which I can serve you?'

'Not as yet, sir,' I answered; 'but it was not to remind you of that I came. I have something to tell your honour that will take your breath away, like the Dutchman's bullet.'

He looked me in the eyes, and I saw that his breath came short. 'Is it about?'—he said, and nodded in the direction of Paddon.

'It is,' I said; and without saying more, we went on to the house. He called a fellow to take charge of my horse, and showed me to a little room, overlooking the flower-garden. Here he shut the door, and waited for me to begin.

'Sir,' I said, 'please to read this;' and I drew out the paper which was signed by Bickford. Before he had read two lines, he gave a great start, and then went on to the end with a strange working of his mouth. Then he rose hastily, and going to a press, poured out a glass of something and drank it, after which he stood for a long time with his back to me, looking out of the window.

'Mr Smerdon,' he said at last, turning round, 'this is heavy news indeed, and I can scarce believe it. I have never thought well of Mr Hilliard; but I would never have dreamed of this.'

'Sir,' I answered, 'when you are come, like me, to middle age, you will not be so easily astonished. I have known rich men do as bad, or worse, to get a thousand pounds.—But will your honour be able to recover the estate?'

'That only a lawyer can tell,' he said. 'At any rate, we must have the evidence of this other man.'

'That we can have, sir,' I said, 'for I am ashamed to say he is my uncle, now lying sick at my house, and it would be well if you saw him without delay.' Then I told him how it had come to my knowledge, and he was pleased to compliment me.

'It was nothing, sir,' I said, 'but luck, which is at the bottom of most things, with a small gift of my own in putting two and two together.'

'I wish,' he said, 'that some of my friends on the bench of magistrates had as much.—But now you must want some refreshment after your ride.'

He withdrew, taking the paper with him; but before he had been gone many minutes, I heard Madam Rendell's voice, which was so clear and penetrating, that she might as well have been in the room.

'What a horrible villain!' she cried. 'George, you must take out a warrant against him immediately, and have him hanged, and all of them.—But he ought to be,' she went on. 'What is the good of the law, if they hang a man for stealing a sheep, and not for stealing an estate?'—Here a door shut, and it was time, for the maid who brought the tray for me, was standing in the doorway, with her eyes and ears, too, wide open.

I made a good meal, and was wishing that I might venture on a pipe, when in came the Squire and his wife, whose cheeks were the colour of the roses outside, and her eyes full of hot indignation.

I rose to make my bow, but she came forward and held out her hand to me. 'Oh, Mr Smerdon!' she exclaimed, 'my husband has told me of you and your dreadful misfortunes, and how you saved him from the Dutchmen; and now you have managed so cleverly, and taken all this trouble to restore him his father's property. I don't know how we can ever show our gratitude.'

'Nelly, my dear Nelly!' broke in the Squire, laughing in spite of himself. 'Do, please, restrain yourself. You have quite put Mr Smerdon out of countenance. I am deeply obliged for all he has done; but we are not at Paddon yet, by a long way.'

'Madam,' I said, 'you have already rewarded me beyond my deserts.—But there is no need for me to stay longer; and if your honour will come over to-morrow, or the day after at latest, we shall make another step forwards.'

This was on a Wednesday; and on Friday, Squire Rendell and a lawyer from Exeter arrived at the 'Bull,' and were shown up into the room where my uncle was. If he had had his wits more about him, he would have been a difficult man to deal with; but shaken as he was, and in danger of his life, in a darkened room, smelling of physic, the lawyer soon had from him very nearly the same confession that Bickford had made. But it seemed that the matter was by no means so easy a one as I had thought, for the lawyer said that, though he could not remember such a case, he feared that the law would not recognise a gambling debt (except in its own lottery); and there was, moreover, a thing called the 'Statute of Limitations,' to prevent the jails being too full. Squire Hilliard was at this time away in London, where it was reported that he used to lead a life very different from his habits at home. Jack Bickford had broken jail, and not been recaptured, which so terrified my uncle, that he was afraid to live again by himself at Teignmouth, and scarcely dared show himself outside our house.

Some two months passed on, during which the lawyers did nothing that I could hear of. One day, towards the middle of September, two men,

Thomas and William Saunders by name, cattle-dealers of Bristol, came to the 'Bull,' substantial men evidently, and riding good horses. They were on the business of buying cattle, to fatten against Christmas, but finding, as they said, prices too high, they left us, and went westward. The day after their departure I had business which called me to Ashburton; and in order to return early, I started almost at daybreak, and rode on so, in the freshness of the morning, that in an hour's time I had reached the town. But as I came to the first houses, I heard behind me the sound of hoofs, and turning, beheld a lady on horseback galloping, and a groom following, who had much ado to keep up. As she came past, I saw that it was Madam Rendell. She knew me, and pulled up as soon as she could, with a plunge and scattering of gravel.

'Madam,' I said, 'is anything the matter? I trust nothing has happened to the Squire?' for I saw that her looks were agitated, and her dress as if she had slept in it.

'I wish I could think so,' she answered; 'but he went yesterday afternoon across the moor to Bovey, and has not returned, though he promised me faithfully to be back by eight. And, what is worse, I have learned that the man Hilliard went the same way.'

'I shall be glad, madam,' I said, 'if you will allow me to see you over the moor; for it is an unkind place, and your groom is not the fellow to be of much service, if you should meet any of the rough folk, tinnerns or gipsies.'

I remembered, in saying this, that Kate would be in a like pother about me; but I turned from my way, and we went up North Street as the chimneys were beginning to smoke.

We climbed the grievously steep and stony lane towards Widecombe, with the song of birds and rustling of leaves around us in Buckland Woods, and the distant roar of Dart in the valley below; and so past Buckland Church, till the Beacon lay on our left. Here the west side of the moor was before us, gray and rocky, and tumbled like a hurricane sea, yet gay with heather and the furze, which, as they say, goes not out of bloom but when love is out of fashion. Nothing alive was to be seen except some moor ponies far away, and a fox gliding like a red shadow among the stones.

We turned eastward to Rippon Tor, from the top of which good eyes can see Wales on a clear day; and passing round the base of it, we saw a horse feeding, with the saddle turned under his belly. The fool of a groom had no more sense than to sing out, 'Squire's mare, ma'am, Squire's mare vor zarten;' and Madam Rendell turned white to the lips and swayed in her saddle. I went to her assistance, and persuaded her to take a sip of cherry brandy, for which my wife was famous. For I had seen what was far worse, a dead man, in horseman's clothes, lying on his back in the furze, a hundred yards away.

I rode up to him with my heart in my mouth; but how was I amazed to find him that worthy dealer in bullocks, Mr Thomas Saunders, dead of a shot in the breast!

I told this to Madam Rendell; but she would not be satisfied except with her own eyes; and wondering greatly what all this might mean, I proposed that we should ascend Hey Tor, which

would give us a wide lookout. Now, on the top of this hill are two huge great rocks of moorstone, like castles, which can be seen half over Devonshire; and as we approached them, a man came from behind the nearer and ran down the hill to us. Before I could think, Madam was galloping to meet him, reckless of rocks and holes, and flung herself off into his arms, while I judged it good manners to try to make out the Start Point, and the groom fell a-blubbering.

But all the surprises that had gone before were nothing to what awaited us when Squire Rendell bade us follow him to the back of the rock, which is shaped like a judge's head with a wig. Here we found that upright magistrate, Squire Hilliard, not upright any longer, but laid helpless, in a sheltered place among the rocks, and covered with a horseman's cloak. At the sight of him, Madam Rendell turned away, as though she saw a snake; but the Squire bade me ride as fast as I could to a moor farm over two miles away, and bring help; and the groom he sent to catch his horse. It was lucky that I was there, for the men at the farm knew no more than their pigs what to do; and I had to rig up a kind of hammock out of poles and rickcloth with my own hands. There was no surgeon at Bovey, so we went on to Ashburton, four men carrying him, and we riding behind.

And as we went, Squire Rendell told me how this had come to pass. He was detained very late at Bovey, and making haste to return, just as he entered on the moor, his mare, a young and skittish beast, fell, throwing him over her head, and galloped away. He set out to walk; but it fell so pitch dark that he altogether lost his way, and was fain to pass the night, wrapped in his cloak, under the lee of a rock. In the morning he found himself on the wrong side of Hey Tor, and was crossing it, when he heard the sound of pistol-shots, and a horse came galloping up the hill with his rider clinging to his neck, who rolled off at his very feet, being no other than Squire Hilliard. Now the explanation was—as made with much groaning by the wounded man—that these honest butchers of Bristol were a pair of notorious London rogues and land-pirates, who had made that town too hot to hold them. One of these Squire Hilliard had met in the low company which he used in London, and given him mortal offence. So that, overtaking him by chance as he returned from Utcombe, words arose between them, and this rogue pulled out a pistol and shot him through the back. He returned the shot, and, as it proved, killed the fellow; but his horse being frightened, ran away with him; and the other man—having, as he said, when he came to be hanged, no stomach for the work—went off at speed. All this had happened not more than an hour ago, and what the two men had said to each other in that time I know not; but when we came to Ashburton, Squire Rendell desired me to accompany his wife back, while a carriage was procured to take the wounded man to Darleigh; and I saw that as we went, there was a look of triumph on her face.

I waited in much anxiety to hear what the ending of the business would be; but before long, I and all the county knew that Squire Hilliard, before he died, which he did in great pain, had

made a will restoring to Squire Rendell the Paddon estate which he had won from his father, but saying nothing of the baseness he had used to do so.

As for my uncle, I packed him home to Teignmouth, bidding him settle accounts how he liked with Jack Bickford, if they met. But this they never did, nor did any one ever learn what became of that honest seaman, for a body found in the salmon nets at Shaldon had been too long in the water for certainty. My uncle died about a year after, leaving his property to a far-away cousin.

Squire Rendell behaved in a truly liberal way, saying that he felt as much indebted to me as if I had indeed brought Paddon back to him; and my eldest son I named after him. And now that he is dead and all concerned in it, I write these lines, at the age of seventy-two, being unwilling that all knowledge of such a strange affair should perish when I follow Kate to the churchyard.

AT THE EDDYSTONE LIGHTHOUSE.

A LADY VISITING.

LADY.

Oh, dwellers on the deadly reef,
The shunned of every crew,
I've sailed across the summer sea
The breakers dread to view;
I've come to mark your lonely home,
And image to my heart
The scene 'mid which, with calm resolve,
You take so brave a part.

MEN.

Ah, Lady Fair, these sleeping waves
Are giants when they wake,
And from their crests the snowy foam
Like plumes of warriors shake!
But as they leap with frantic force
And thunder-threat of war,
We keep aloft the radiant Light
To be a warning star!

LADY.

Oh, give me each your good right hand;
Oh, give it free, I pray;
I hold each sturdy clasp more worth
Than aught I know to-day.
Oh, let me feel a new-born pride,
Nor chide the fancy down,
That thus my silken life is knit
A moment to your own.

MEN.

Oh, Lady Fair, your kindly words
Our hearts will fondly store,
To cheer us on our lonely rock,
And 'mid the tempest's roar;
While seamen brave shall fearless sail,
And know the reef is far,
For we will guard the radiant Light
That is their warning star!

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

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THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.

MANCHESTER is responsible for a number of bold and successful industrial innovations, and wonderful as the result of some of these has been in the past, the present year (1893) will bring to completion a scheme which certainly surpasses all former efforts of a similar kind in extent, in cost, and in usefulness, and which, from its far-reaching influence, will form an epoch in the history of British trade and manufactures. This new and great undertaking is the Ship Canal which is to convert Manchester into a commodious and well equipped inland seaport, and put it in communication with all parts of the world. The history of the Canal, so far, reveals that during its construction it had more than its share of those difficulties and misfortunes to overcome which usually attend great enterprises when under construction. But these—with the powerful and influential opposition it has had to encounter, and its disheartening financial troubles—will all be forgotten soon, more so now that its completion is an accomplished fact, and they need not be recapitulated or enlarged on here. The questions to be considered now are: (1) What has the Ship Canal Company received in return for its large expenditure? and (2) What are its capabilities and prospects?

The Canal is thirty-five and a half miles in length between its two extremities, and as Manchester stands sixty and a half feet above the sea-level, five sets of locks had to be provided to enable vessels to overcome this difference. It is the widest canal in existence, being nearly twice the width of the Suez Canal, and will allow steamers of the largest size to pass each other. Like the Suez Canal, it has a depth of water of twenty-six feet; while it is three feet deeper than the Amsterdam Canal, and has a capacity fifty per cent. greater. The entrance to the Canal from the Mersey is twelve feet deeper than the lowest dock sill in Liverpool, and will allow vessels of the

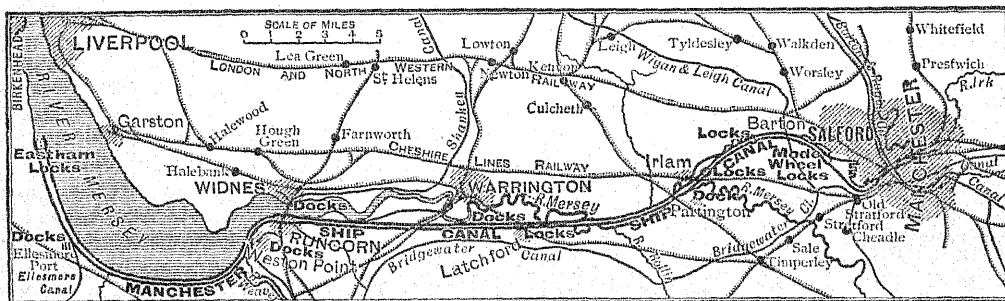
largest tonnage to enter or leave the Canal at any state of the tide. In many of our large seaports this can only be done at full tide; and occasionally ships have to wait some days for spring-tides before there is deep enough water to float them over the dock sill. In consequence, it may frequently occur that of two steamers crossing the bar at the same time, one for Liverpool and the other for Manchester, the latter may be discharging her cargo before the other has got into dock. Steamers can never, except in case of accident, occupy more than half a tide in the passage through the Canal.

While nearly the whole length of the two banks may be considered quay space and the Canal itself as a gigantic dock, there is besides ample provision made to enlarge the quay and dock areas. For a considerable distance back from the Canal there is a broad strip of land on each bank, the value of which in the future it would be indeed difficult to estimate. The large dock area at each port is admirably arranged, and must have cost a considerable amount of forethought in its allotment for the accommodation of the immense quantity and variety of materials to be dealt with. The upper reach of the Canal, which contains the Manchester and Salford docks, is over five miles long, three and a half miles of which is fifty feet wider than the usual breadth, in order to give additional quay space, and more room in the Canal for vessels passing into and out of the docks. These docks cover one hundred and four acres, and the quay accommodation one hundred and fifty-two acres, giving quay and dock areas greater than many of the first-class seaports in the world. There is above the Mode Wheel locks greater dock accommodation than there is in the whole ports of Bristol or of Cardiff. There are smaller docks at Runcorn and at Weston Point; and the construction of a large dock at Warrington is part of the scheme to be carried out later.

The cost of all this has, of course, been enor-

mous, and will amount to nearly fifteen millions of pounds sterling, including the purchase of the Bridgewater Canal and the 4840 acres of land along both banks. (See *Chambers's Journal*, February 9, 1889.) The Canal throughout, in all its details, has been constructed in such a way and of such materials as if it were intended to exist for some generations without repair or alteration, except in the way of being made more convenient or commodious as experience may prove necessary. It has been the fashion to compare it with the Suez Canal. 'Comparisons are odious,' we are told, and this one is especially so. The Suez Canal has only one-half the capacity of the other, and in its construction is a mere ditch, through which steamers are allowed to move at the slowest speed possible, for fear of washing down the sandbanks of which its sides are formed. The speed of steamers along the new waterway

will be from five to six miles an hour; and the passage will be completed—after making allowance of from twenty-five to thirty-five minutes' delay in passing the five series of locks—in about seven hours. The banks of the Canal are carefully protected from injury caused by the wash from passing steamers, the prevention or repairing of which is a frequent cause of expense in canal management. The locks, with their massive gates, are pronounced the strongest and largest in the world. The first is at Eastham, where the Canal begins; and there is tide-water for twenty-one miles to the next locks at Latchford, where there is a rise of sixteen and a half feet; thence to Irlam locks, seven and three-eighths miles—rise sixteen feet; to Barton, two and five-eighths miles, with a rise of fifteen feet; to Mode Wheel, about three miles, with a rise of thirteen feet; and thence to Salford:



MAP OF THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.

making a total of thirty-five and a half miles, and a rise of sixty and a half feet.

All the deviation and main lines of railways and roads, with the Bridgewater Canal crossing the great waterway, are carried over by means of swing or high-level bridges with a clear headway above the Canal of seventy-five feet. The Bridgewater Canal has for itself a swing aqueduct of novel and ingenious construction, weighing fourteen hundred tons. The headway of the fixed bridges over the Canal—seventy-five feet—is considered high enough to clear the masts of cargo steamers, while those of larger tonnage will be able to lower their topmasts.

The Canal has been made in order to carry goods to and from the largest and most populous industrial districts on the globe. Belgium and Holland are considered the most densely populated countries in Europe, and the average in these countries in 1884 was equal to four hundred and sixteen persons per square mile; while the average in the United Kingdom is three hundred and ten to the square mile. Now, looking on a map of Lancashire, and forming a triangle by drawing lines from Stockport to Preston and Leeds, the triangle encloses a greater manufacturing population than any area of similar extent in the world, this area being equal to seven hundred and thirteen square miles, and containing a population of five thousand four hundred and fourteen persons to the square mile, or thirteen times greater than the average square-mile population of Belgium.

While the population of Lancashire has increased about twenty-five per cent. within the last ten

years, it is extremely probable that during the next ten years that increase will be more than doubled. Along the banks of the great waterway there is sure to grow, considering the advantages offered, a large number of industrial works. Even now, the demand for sites is increasing rapidly, and a better situation could not be imagined, with the Canal in front and railway communication behind; and before many years are past, the two banks bid fair to be lined with villages, and new as well as old industries. Still further, as showing the advantages and favourable prospects of the great waterway, it is already in connection with thirteen established canals; and many others are making the necessary arrangements for completing such connection as will cause them to act as feeders to the Ship Canal. If we consider, also, the vast amount of raw material of all kinds which the Canal will carry to Manchester and the great manufacturing districts in touch with it, and that this raw material will be sent back down the Canal again in the shape of manufactured goods for all parts of the world, we may form some faint idea of the tremendous amount of work the Canal will have to perform.

This brings us to consider what are the prospects and earning capabilities of the Canal—a matter which will depend very largely on the economy offered in the trans-shipment of goods from Manchester to Liverpool, and in the immunity from injury through being less often trans-shipped and handled. When the Ship Canal was brought before Parliament, the scales of rates to be charged for the use of the Canal and docks were fixed at a sum graduated for the different articles, which

practically reduces the prices to fifty per cent. of the charges made hitherto. But this is not all. The initial cost of bringing a cargo of cotton, for instance, from New Orleans to Manchester will not be much above the cost (if any) of bringing it from the same place to Liverpool. By Canal the total cost will be 7s. per ton from Liverpool. By contrast, the cost from Liverpool to Manchester at present is 13s. 8d. per ton. The saving by the Canal is thus 6s. 8d. per ton, which, on the eight hundred thousands of tons expected to be carried annually over the Canal, will represent a saving to the importers of £260,000. By taking the average cost of the carriage of thirteen leading articles by the old and new tariffs, we get a saving of 7s. 8d. per ton. Some of the proposed economies are very important. The saving on raw cotton, for instance, will be 6s. 8d. per ton; wool, 8s. 8d.; sugar, 11s. 3d.; grain, 5s. 1d. per ton, and so on.

An estimate of the probable traffic over the Canal, prepared by the 'Consultative Committee,' which made an exhaustive inquiry into the prospects of the undertaking before it was begun, gave for the second year after it is opened nearly 4,250,000 tons, yielding a gross revenue of nearly £800,000 sterling. From this estimate the Committee—considering the scheme an untried one—deducted twenty-five per cent., and this deduction reduced the tonnage to 3,321,320 tons, and the revenue to £595,630 sterling. Appended to the reduced estimate was the following opinion: 'Our estimate of traffic and revenue is much larger, and points to the undertaking becoming increasingly remunerative under capable administration.' The opinion is generally held that in the second year's returns the estimate of the 'Consultative Committee' may be accepted without the deduction of twenty-five per cent. so cautiously proposed by the 'Committee.' They state, further, that 'their estimate of traffic and revenue is not based on any of the statements made in the prospectus, that they have arrived at their conclusions on an independent basis,' and 'are of opinion that during the second year after the Canal and dock are open for traffic, there is a reasonable prospect of securing along the whole length of the canal 4,428,532 tons of cargo, yielding a gross revenue of £794,173 sterling.'

The encouragement and support promised to the Canal Company by the greatest importers and exporters, including merchants and ship-owners, show clearly the attitude that is likely to be assumed by the greater number of those whose interests are thereby to be improved and increased through the facilities and advantages offered; and as the time for opening the Canal to traffic approaches, communications are more and more frequently received from many foreign parts, requesting that the necessary arrangements be made for their accommodation. Some of these applicants are from the most unlikely quarters, proving the introduction of new manufactures and trades. One hundred and eighty-three ship-owners, who represent over one thousand steamers, with a tonnage of nearly one and a half millions—being about one quarter of that of the United Kingdom, without including many other steamers from Liverpool—have signed a promise to use the Canal when convenient.

Turning now to exports. Fifty-six leading

exporters have declared that over one million of tons of textile goods have passed outward each year. Machinery to the value of four millions sterling is exported annually; and many other exports, coal, salt, chemicals, &c., could be added. It is claimed that Liverpool and the Humber ports have fully forty per cent. of the exports and imports of Great Britain. Judging from the applications for sites for industrial purposes—some of them new to this district—also for dock accommodation for lines of steamers, with all the expectations indicated above, Manchester may reasonably expect that a large share of existing traffic will be sent through the Canal, as well as new traffic that is likely to be created through the new and increased facilities presented; for even now there is the prospect of a greater number of steamers entering and leaving the Canal than there is in any other port of the kingdom, if we except London and Liverpool; but even if the Canal does not increase or develop trade and manufactures to the extent anticipated, it must at least arrest a decline in a staple industry which is of immeasurable importance to the Lancashire district, and which for some years past has been in danger of losing the powerful hold it had on the markets of foreign countries, particularly in the Far East.

What will be the result of this creation of a new and large port in the heart of the kingdom? 'It means new industries, new trades of all kinds, and new administrative organisations of many kinds, as well as the extension of old ones. It means the erection of thousands of new buildings for habitation or for business purposes, for education, for recreation, and for all kinds of services public or private.' Years ago, the late Sir W. Fairbairn said: 'Any improvement which will enable ocean-going vessels to discharge their cargoes in a commodious wet dock in Manchester would form an epoch of such magnitude in the history of Manchester as would quadruple her population, and would render her the first as well as the most enterprising city in Europe.'

POMONA.*

CHAPTER XXVI.

And I walked as if apart
From myself, when I could stand,
And I pined my own heart,
As if I held it in my hand.

MRS BROWNING.

SOME people's troubles are spread over the whole course of their lives, interspersed, thank Heaven! for most of us with intervals of peace and prosperity. Other people, like Job, have them all together, one sorrow crowding on the heels of another so quickly that there is no time for rebound as the blows of fate shower on the devoted head.

So it was with Pomona Lester, who, after a life of almost unclouded sunshine, only obscured a little of late by anxiety for her mother, but brightened by that all too short love-dream, that brief midsummer madness, was suddenly, without a moment's warning, enveloped in this dark cloud of trouble. Everything seemed taken from

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her at a blow. If death had taken Maurice Moore from her, each interview in those sweet summer days, each word, each tone, each look, could have been drawn from the rich storehouse of memory for blessed, healing comfort; now they furnished an armoury of sharp cutting weapons, from which, at any moment, some suggestion, some association of ideas, could draw and plunge into her quivering heart; and her whole proud nature would shrink, and her face crimson with shame at some remembrance of this friend of Mr Ludlow's, this false lover of poor, little Sage's, this man, whose fancy had been caught by Beechfield and the fortune appertaining to its supposed owner.

There was no need for Pomona to try to hide her feelings, to counterfeit the old brightness, and to avoid the scrutinising gaze. There need have been no occasion even to use the word 'mother,' which seemed to choke her at first, but now came constantly unbidden and unresisted to her lips.

Lady Lester slept away the last few hours of her life, only partly conscious of the prayers said by her side, but aware up to the very last if Pomona's hand left its warm hold of hers, or when the girl's voice whispered 'Mother, dearest!'

During the days that followed, Pomona was too prostrate even for thought. She was dimly aware that this could not last for ever; that she could not go on in that darkened room, with Martin waiting on her hand and foot, and nursing her like a child, where her great grief was considered natural and sacred, and no one intruded on it or troubled her with questions, and she might go as often as she pleased into 'mother's' room and see the waxen face smiling young again among the flowers.

Lady Charteris had come as Lady Lester's oldest friend, that Pomona might not be alone; but she was kind enough and wise enough not to attempt consolation, but to leave the girl to herself, though she strongly deprecated Pomona's fixed determination to go to the funeral; and Pomona almost gave way to her persuasions when she found how weak and shaky she felt as Martin tenderly dressed her in her deep mourning. But she was glad she persisted. The beautiful August sunshine lay on the broad stretches of the park as the solemn procession passed along the beech avenue, where autumn was beginning to make its coming known in a touch of yellow and red on the shining leaves; and the deer raised their dainty heads to listen to the bell tolling deep and slow from the little church. Generations of Lesters had been laid to rest in that little Norman church, just inside the park, which was crowded now from far and near with gentle and simple for Lady Lester's funeral, and Pomona met many a kind, sympathetic look both from rich and poor. There was one face among the throng that caught her notice both in the church and at the grave-side, an honest, kind, middle-aged face, looking at her with straightforward, fatherly eyes, that more than once met hers with a quick glance of sympathy, as the comforting words of the grand and beautiful service sounded tenderly in her sad heart.

She forgot all about that face and the shabby coat attached to it till later in the day, when most

of the funeral guests had left, and she went down to the library, where Mr Freestone was sitting, as she thought alone, looking over the family papers. But when she entered the room, this same stranger was sitting there with the lawyer, and at her entrance got up and prepared to leave the room.

'Dr Merridew,' Mr Freestone said; and Pomona held out her hand.

'You are Sage's father and'—She was going to add, 'my uncle,' but she stopped. 'Don't go,' she said. 'What I want to say to Mr Freestone concerns Sage so much, that I should like you to hear.'

Now Dr Merridew had set himself steadily against Pomona; and all that Sage had told him about her had only added to his prejudice against her; but the first look at her in church had converted him; and when he took her little hand, he was her faithful champion for life. So he drew up a chair for her, and resumed his own seat opposite Mr Freestone at the table.

'I wrote a letter to you some days ago,' Pomona said.

'You did,' answered the old lawyer; 'and I should have replied to it but for the sad event that has intervened.'

He stopped, and she looked expectantly at him, but he said no more.

'Did you know—had you the least suspicion that I was not Sir John and Lady Lester's daughter, but only an adopted daughter?'

Mr Freestone's wrinkled old face was inscrutable; but Dr Merridew turned with interest as she spoke.

'Did you know?' she repeated.

And the lawyer bent forward and laid his withered old hand on hers: 'My dear young lady, I have known it these twenty years.'

'But surely, surely, I have no right to any of the property? It is Sage Merridew who ought to have it.'

'So she would, my dear; and perhaps it was a little hard on her that she didn't; only, you see, Sir John, after the death of the two boys, left it, as he was perfectly able to do, absolutely to you, subject, of course, to the life-interest of Lady Lester.'

'But I never knew I was not her own child.'

'No; it was Lady Lester's wish that you should not; and she took every precaution to prevent it. I always think unnecessary secrets are a mistake, as they generally leak out somehow, and sometimes do a lot of harm. But you would have been obliged to hear it now, in the ordinary course of affairs. May I ask how you heard of it?'

But Pomona had turned to Dr Merridew, thereby avoiding a question she did not care to answer. 'Dr Merridew, I am sorry.'

'Don't be sorry, my dear. I am heartily glad. Fancy my poor little Sage with a big fortune and large estates! It would have crushed us both, with the weight of responsibility. Besides, Lady Lester has left my little girl what is really a large fortune.—Three hundred pounds a year, isn't it, Mr Freestone? It means a lot of solid happiness. You can't buy ready-made happiness with money; but you can buy a good deal that makes up happiness if you know how to manage it.—And I am very grateful to your mother,

Miss Pomona; though, not so long ago, I prided myself that I would rather starve than accept a penny from one of my wife's family. But I'm not so young or so foolish or so proud or so strong or so whatever you like to call it, as I was; and I have a poor, little, sick Kitty, who will want a lot of care this winter; and perhaps that money of Sage's may mean the south of France and life to my little girl. So, my dear, keep Beechfield, and welcome.'

'But'—Pomona hesitated—'I was told she was engaged, and that want of means prevented her marriage.'

'Ah, that is all at an end; and as Sage is not here to look reproachful, I may say, and a good thing too! And at the risk of Mr Freestone thinking me an impractical and sentimental old goose, I wish to record my opinion that any marriage prevented by want of means is a fortunate escape for both parties concerned.'

'And if a man marries a girl for her money?'

'I don't regard it as a marriage at all; not holy matrimony anyhow. It is merely a civil contract, and a poor concern even at that.'

The old lawyer was deep burrowing in a tin deed-box; and Dr Merriew and Pomona stood in the window, against which a sudden storm of rain was beating; though, beyond, the sun was still shining on the great trees in the park, like smiles through tearful eyes; and Dr Merriew talked softly to the girl of 'her mother,' always using the dear familiar name, and of the tender mother's love that had surrounded her happy young life, and was still a living, present thing, though out of sight.

'Is Sage very unhappy?' she asked presently.

'Yes, very, just now. We all have to go through it sooner or later; but she believes in her hero implicitly still, and though I can't say I agree with her, if it is any consolation to her, let her, say I.'

'Yes,' said Pomona softly, 'let her.'

And as they stood and talked, a great rainbow spanned the heaven in front of them, one end resting on the great beech-trees, and the other on the shining grass, where the deer stood, not knowing of the fairy gold that might have been found beneath their feet. And on the ivy outside the window, each leaf held a drop of rain, and every drop had a glistening little rainbow of its own, as every life has its sorrow; every sorrow, in God's sunshine, hope.

'You are a doctor,' Pomona said, when they parted. 'Don't you think the south of France would do me good this winter too?'

'Just what I was thinking. I will write a prescription.'

'And I am so used to nursing, I can help Sage to take care of Kitty.'

'To be sure you can.'

CHAPTER XXVII.

Comfort? Comfort scorn'd of devils; this is truth, the poet says,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is rememb'ring happier days.
TENNYSON.

Five years have gone by since then, and Owen Ludlow is still living at Scar, a very lonely old man, wandering about the beach and cliffs in an aimless, restless way, growing yearly more odd and morose and unsociable. Mrs Stock looks

after him as she used to after her husband, in a pitying, patronising way, as she would after a troublesome child; but as she expressed it, she 'was terrible put about' when she first heard him spoken of as the mad painter.

'Lor' bless you! he ain't any more mad than half the men is, as is a poor, helpless lot. There ain't no harm in him. He used to be a terrible fine painter, and thought a lot of up in London, folks say; and one of them pictures was in the Royal Academy, and folks did say as how he got a wonderful big price for it; but that ain't true neither, for he've agot it now, and it's hung up in his studio, right over against the door, with a curtain drawn across it. But it got hurted coming down in the train; them porters is that careless; so he've painted out the face in the middle, which he set great store by, as I've heard tell was took from his wife as died when her first baby was born; and he've never painted it in again. He don't do no painting to speak of now, though he gets out his brushes nows and then, and sets his palette. 'Tis bad when a man's getting on in life and ain't got neither chick nor child to look after him.—He ain't heard nothing of Miss Sage this ever so long. She's been a deal in furrin parts along with poor, little Miss Kitty, as enjoys terrible bad health, poor lamb! And Mr Moore—as we fancied was making up to Miss Sage, and a nice couple they'd amade too—he've gone to New Zealand or somewheres; and Mr Ludlow don't seem to care to hear his name as much as mentioned; so I reckon they've fell out.'

But one day in May a lady came to the farm asking for Mr Ludlow—a tall, handsome-looking lady, whose face Mrs Stock could not put a name to, though it seemed in a curious way familiar to her.

'Mr Ludlow, mum? He's down to the beach, I reckon. He mostly goes down fine mornings. But if you steps down the street and along the beach-path, and looks a bit along towards the Point, you're bound to see him, for he don't go far.'

The apple blossom was out in the farm orchard, and the tree by the studio window was covered with dainty flowers, and Mrs Stock broke a little bit off to give to the young lady, who admired it so.

A little way along the beach, on the flat stone where Kitty used to watch the doings of the sea-creatures in the pool, and Sage had read Maurice's letter, sat Owen Ludlow, a very solitary-looking figure against the brown seaweed-covered rocks and gray-green sea. He was not painting or pretending to do so, but leaning forward with his elbows on his knees, and his chin on his hands, gazing away towards the Point, against which the foam flew up, and round which the white gulls circled.

He did not hear her step as she came over the rocks towards him. He had taken off his hat, which lay on the rock beside him; and she noticed how white he had grown since she saw him last, and how the wind from the sea stirred his hair, giving a sad suggestion of King Lear in his desolate old age. He was so still, that a momentary chill swept over her that he might be dead; but the next minute he had moved, passing his hand across his eyes with a sort of

patient weariness that was very pathetic. And then he turned, and saw her standing with the apple blossom in her hand, and the look of tenderness and pity on her face; and he rose with a look of sudden, glad recognition and delight.

'Katharine,' he said, 'I knew you would forgive me at last.'

And then he would have fallen, had not Pomona caught him and drawn the gray head to rest on her shoulder, saying, 'Father!'

THE END.

MARIE ANTOINETTE.

In the late autumn of 1793 there sat one evening by a cheerful fire, in a snug parlour in Dumfriesshire, a little knot of friends, the mother of the household, some of the children, a married daughter and her husband, the minister, who was a near neighbour, and the farmer of Cleughhead. The early tea was over, and they were having a game at whist, listening at intervals to the dashes of rain on the window-panes and the roar of the Nith as it rushed in full torrent to the sea. 'The guidman's late,' said the mistress, a little anxiously; but as she spoke, a horse's hoofs were heard on the gravel, and in another minute the rider, with topcoat hastily thrown off, but still booted and spurred, entered the room. Something strange in his aspect struck them; but before they could speak, he said in an awestricken tone: 'The Queen is dead.'

'Dead!' was the horrified rejoinder.

'Ay, dead—murdered on the 16th of October; carried to the place of execution on a common cart, with her hands tied.'

No need to ask who the 'Queen' was. Marie Antoinette's fate had been canvassed everywhere for weeks past; but it was the universal belief that, bad as the revolutionary party might be, they would never dare to kill her: she would be saved somehow. But the end had come, and what an end for Maria Theresa's daughter!

A little girl of ten who sat quietly by the fire, and who lived to be over a hundred years old, often told in her later years of the vivid impression made upon her young mind that evening. Never could she forget the dismay and horror which filled the little party, and the sudden gloom which came upon them. Every one thought the king's death terrible, she used to say; but when it came to murdering the fair, gracious Queen—that, indeed, could not be forgiven or passed over, and for months nothing else was talked of.

Though a hundred eventful years have passed, Marie Antoinette's fate has still a pathetic charm; and now, on the anniversary of her death, we look back on her with tender interest, as the little group assembled in the Dumfriesshire parlour might have done, as daughter, wife, and mother, leaving parties and state questions aside, trying to get a glimpse of the real woman—'la belle pauvre reine,' as a French working-man in blue blouse and flat cap called her, in speaking of her one lovely spring evening on the Versailles car.

Little 'Antoinette,' as she was called, was the

favourite child of Maria Theresa and Emperor Francis I. She was born at Vienna on November 2, 1755, the day of the great earthquake at Lisbon; but her early years were passed chiefly at Schönbrunn, in simple country pleasures, the child's garden there being the precursor of the gardens at Trianon. A considerable part of her time, as she grew a little older, was devoted to study, Metastasio teaching her Italian, and Gluck giving her lessons on the harpsichord. As, from her early days, Maria Theresa destined her to be the bride of the Dauphin, she got a French tutor for her, the Abbé de Vermond, and French actors to teach her elocution.

One evening in April 1770, the French ambassador preferred a formal request for the hand of the Archduchess, all having been arranged before; and after ten days spent in festivities, the bride of fifteen left all who had been dear to her. When she left Vienna, the poor people on the streets crowded round her carriage weeping, as they bade her farewell, and following the cortège to the very gates of the city. In a pavilion on an island in the Rhine near Strasburg, she had to divest herself of all her German clothing and array herself in French clothes brought from Paris. As she passed into the salon where the French party awaited her, an eye-witness says: 'It was impossible to refrain from admiring her airy walk; one smile alone won the heart.' Wonderful festivities welcomed her to Strasburg and other cities. She charmed the students at Soissons by replying to a Latin oration in a sentence or two of the same language.

The Court came out to meet the bride as she drew near Compiegne. Quickly she alighted from her coach and sank on her knee in homage to the king, Louis XV., who raised her at once with a graceful compliment to her mother: 'Vous étiez déjà de la famille, car votre mère a l'âme de Louis le Grand.' Among the family group who awaited her at La Muette was the Princess Elizabeth, the Dauphin's youngest sister, and Princess Lamballe, both of whom were to be so closely associated with her in after-years. The Dauphin came with his grandfather to meet her; but beyond that, we hear very little of him!

The young couple were married in the Chapel at Versailles next day, May 16th, at one o'clock. A canopy of cloth of silver was held over their heads by two bishops, and the ceremony was performed by the Primate of France.

Imagination pictures the beautiful young creature, gay and bright, winning all hearts, and yet by the dignity of her bearing reminding all that she was the daughter of the Empress Queen. When she made her entry into Paris, and dined in state at the Tuileries, the shouts of the people were so vehement that she had to show herself on the balcony facing the garden. 'Grand Dieu! what a concourse!' she said, looking at the sea of faces.

'Madame,' said the old Duc de Brissac, Governor of Paris, 'I may tell you without fear of offending the Dauphin that they are all lovers!'

Did she think of that gallant speech when

once again she looked on a sea of angry faces from the same spot?

The years of her early married life passed on in a gay round of outward pleasure, theatre-going, weekly balls, card-parties, and sledging, which she introduced at Versailles; but with it all she had inward trials and disappointments, cabals in the Court, and jealousies in the family circle.

On the 10th of May 1774, Louis XV. lay dying of smallpox at Versailles. The young couple were awaiting the end in their own apartments. In the words of Carlyle: 'Hark! what sound is that?—sound "terrible and absolutely like thunder." It is the rush of the whole Court, rushing as in eager to salute the new sovereigns: Hail to your Majesties! The Dauphin and Dauphiness are King and Queen! Overpowered with many emotions, they fall on their knees together, and with streaming tears, exclaim: "O God! guide us, protect us; we are too young to reign."

The carriages drove up, and the whole Court set off for Choisy, at four in the afternoon. Four days later, the young Queen wrote a letter to her mother, full of joyous confidence in the bright future before her. But the Empress, knowing the burden of a crown, feared that her child's happiest days were over. Soon after she became Queen, the King presented her with the Little Trianon, a villa about a mile from the château of Versailles, within the Park. The house remains to this day, a cheerful, unpretentious abode, with lawns, gardens, and winding walks, which were the delight of the poor Queen. On the outskirts of the garden she constructed the *hameau*, which was her special delight—the rustic farmhouse by the little lake; the miller's house; the dairy, where she loved to make butter; the flower-beds, where she worked. She forgot, as she said, when dressed in her muslin gown and straw hat, that she was a Queen; and made coffee for the King, as if they were country folks. Even here, and in these innocent pursuits, detraction followed her! She was called 'the Austrian' in contempt.

In the year 1778 a little daughter was born to her—the Madame Royale of history. In October 1781 a Prince was at last born, and the whole nation rejoiced with the glad father and mother. All the 'trades' of Paris came out to Versailles in procession; while the 'Dames de la Halle' paid a state visit to the Queen.

Little did all these gay congratulating folks, and least of all the happy King and Queen, think of a very different procession which was to come and tear them away from Versailles for ever.

The Dauphin at this time began to show signs of delicacy, so it was with great thankfulness that the King and Queen hailed the birth of another son in 1785. The proud father took him in his arms, calling him the 'little Norman,' and created him Duc de Normandie, saying, the name alone would bring him happiness—dreaming not that few if any kings' sons would have such a miserable fate.

It was about this time that the affair of the Diamond Necklace took place; and though it was proved that the handwriting and even

the appearance of the Queen had been counterfeited, still some remained who were only too willing to believe evil of the Queen; and at the head of this party was the wicked Duc d'Orleans, afterwards known as 'Egalité.'

The Dauphin steadily declined in health; but the Duc de Normandie grew and flourished; and it is amusing to read the account his mother gives of him in a letter to her brother the Emperor: 'He has all his elder brother wants; he is a true peasant's child, tall, stout, and ruddy.' The Princess Elizabeth became from this time the Queen's closest, dearest friend—her sister in heart as well as in name, never to be separated but by death.

In the long procession of events which began with the summons of the States-general to Versailles in 1789, and ended with the Conciergerie and the guillotine in 1793, only a few traits of the Queen as wife and mother can be noted here. On the 4th of May the States-general met; and on the 4th of June, in the midst of stormy scenes, the little Dauphin died. In July came the storming of the Bastille; and on the 17th of July, Louis XVI. drove into Paris with a very slender escort, determined to pacify the people. We are told that Marie Antoinette sat with her children shut up in her own room. She shed no tear, but a sob broke from her now and again with the words, 'They will never let him return.'

He returned only to fresh trials and indignities. In September they were warned that the mob would attack Versailles; but so little did they think it possible, that when the Duc de Chinon—who, disguised as an artisan, left Paris with the mob, but got to Versailles some time before them—reached the palace he found the King was hunting in the Bois de Meudon; while the Queen was working in her garden at Trianon. Messengers were sent in hot haste; and we can picture the Queen hurrying away from her garden, little thinking she would never return.

When the savage mob shouted for her more like wild beasts than human beings, she took her children one in each hand and stepped quietly out on the balcony. 'No children!' was the savage yell which greeted them. Leading them back into the room, she returned alone, and stood with arms crossed and eyes looking heavenward, expecting instant death; but her very fearlessness disarmed the mob. When they were driving into Paris, they were surrounded by this mob, who brandished pikes with the heads of the slain body-guard, and shouted they would have plenty of bread, as they were bringing the baker, the bakeress, and the baker's son with them. Her mother's heart was wrung by the sufferings of the child, who could get nothing to eat all day long.

In their varying fortunes at the Tuileries, how many glimpses of her we get! watching the Dauphin playing in the gardens, feeding ducks in the pond, teaching Madame Royale, walking with the King, or riding with the Princess Elizabeth—though always guarded—in the Bois de Boulogne. For years past her character had been strengthening; she set the example of her mother ever before her, and there was much truth in the saying of Mirabeau, 'The only man about the King is his wife.'

How great her presence of mind was, was shown in many details of their journey to Varennes. Count Fersen drove them through the streets of Paris to the Porte St Martin, where they were transferred to a *berline* which was waiting for them. Every one knows the sad story of a hundred miles without any sign of pursuit; then the uniforms of Bouillé's soldiers appearing at Chalons, and the Queen's fervent exclamation, 'Thank God, we are saved.' Drouet's recognition of the King from a stamp at St Menehould, and the stoppage of the party at Varennes about eleven at night, when Bouillé's troops were actually waiting at the other end of the town. If the King had not put his head out of the window, which he would do in spite of all warnings—if young Bouillé, who was in command, had sat up all night—if the troops had been at the nearer instead of the farther end of the town, who can say how matters might have turned?

For this once only did the Queen's courage and spirits fail. She wept incessantly, beseeching the grocer's wife in whose house they spent the night to have pity on her children; and when she saw there was no hope, she sat gazing on the two sleeping children with the calmness of despair.

They were carried back to Paris, where they found themselves really prisoners at the Tuileries, sentinels being placed in the galleries and gardens, and even at the door of the Queen's bedroom. No wonder she writes at this time: 'It takes more courage to support my condition than to fight a pitched battle.' Insults and menaces; and when they went to the opera and the royalists shouted, 'Vive le roi! vive la reine!' the greater part of the house rose, shouting, 'No master, no queen.' Yet at other times the fickle people cheered them to the echo. 'It is a queer nation this of ours,' wrote Princess Elizabeth; 'but it has its charming moments.'

As months passed, the Queen, though brave outwardly, often found relief in tears when alone with her children. One day the Dauphin was reading a book in which he came upon the expression 'happy as a queen.' 'That is odd,' he said; 'for my mother is a Queen, and yet she often weeps.'

Tippoo Sahib at this time sent an embassy to the King with gifts of Indian stuffs and jewels, which the Queen gave away all except some pieces of white muslin, of which we shall hear again.

Then came the 20th of June, when a mob surrounded the Tuileries, calling for the heads of 'Veto and his wife,' which was a new name they had given their victims. This storm blew over. But on the 20th of August, after hours of terror and scenes of horror, Louis was persuaded to leave the Tuileries and throw himself on the protection of the Assembly; and the hapless family left the palace, which only Madame Royale would ever enter again. Marie Antoinette, it is said, paused a moment at the foot of the great staircase. 'Fear nothing, Madame,' said a kind-hearted Swiss. 'I do fear nothing,' was her reply as she passed on.

Across the gulf of a century, we see them still, a mournful little party, crossing the terrace on foot, the little Dauphin, child-like, kicking the

dead leaves as he went, and the King remarking, 'How early the leaves fall this year!'

From the Assembly they pass to the Tour du Temple; and we see them no more till they come out one by one to die. From Madame Royale's Journal, we find that she and her aunt shared one dark small room; and in another not much larger, a little bed was placed for the Dauphin beside his mother's. The King's rooms were on a storey above. Insulting phrases were written on the very walls of their rooms; while on the King's were painted weapons and instruments of torture. Without proper clothing and food, and almost without attendants—watched by guards and spies—ignorant of all that was passing beyond the walls of their prison—still they had a mournful happiness in being together. One day after dinner, the King and Queen were going to play backgammon, at which they could sometimes exchange a word without being heard by their guards, when cries were heard outside; one of the guards closed the window, another insisted the Queen should come and look out. It was the head of Madame Lamballe which the ruffians had cut off, and forced a poor hairdresser to dress as if in life. The sight seemed to turn the Queen to stone.

Soon came Louis's sentence of death and their last interview. Through the glass doors the guard watched them: there sat the King, the Dauphin standing beside him, Madame Royale kneeling at his knee, the Queen leaning on his shoulder, Madame Elizabeth behind in silent anguish. He tears himself away, but says he will see them next morning. All night the Queen lies shuddering, and when morning comes, the roll of the drums tells her that he is gone.

A little longer, and then her son was taken from her. One night he lay asleep; a shawl was hung before his eyes, to shield them from the light by which the Queen was mending her clothes; a band of Commissioners burst in and snatched him from her. Happily, she never knew the fate of the beautiful boy she loved so tenderly. A month after, in the dead of night, she herself was carried off to the Conciergerie, where the cell she occupied is still shown. As she passed through the doorway she struck her head. One of the men asked if she had hurt herself. Her answer was: 'Nothing can hurt me now.'

Those who wished to see her could pass through her cell, where she sat as in a stupor, on an old chair, in a dress which had once been white.

On the 13th of October came the trial of the 'Widow Capet.' Clad in white muslin, with a muslin fichu, part of Tippoo Sahib's present, her gray hair drawn simply back and knotted loosely behind her head—never had she looked more queenly. The trial lasted night and day till the early morning of the 16th of October, when sentence of death was pronounced. She was led from the court to the condemned cell at five in the morning, and her only request was for writing materials. She then wrote the touching letter to Madame Elizabeth which may still be seen in the Archives Nationales in Paris. When this last duty was done, she threw herself on the pallet-bed and slept till the executioner called her

at seven. She was taken on a common cart, with hands bound, seated on a plank beside the executioner, to the Place de la Révolution. She heeded not the jeers and execrations which followed her on her long slow progress through streets filled with people whose idol she had been. One sad glance she cast at the Tuileries, and then mounted the scaffold. As she did so, she trod on the executioner's foot. 'Pardon me, sir,' she said, and then, 'Make haste;' and in a moment all was over.

LESS THAN KIN.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

A FORTNIGHT later, Joseph Wakelin was standing at the vicarage door, as he had stood every morning for a week past. His hand was upon the bell, which he pulled with evident care. The man's face seemed to have altered of late, losing something of its coarse self-assurance; and there was an obvious expression of anxiety in the eyes which he raised to Ena's face as she appeared in response to the summons. It was Jane's work, but Jane was otherwise occupied; for sickness is apt to disorganise a household, and sickness—the result of his last day's visit—was upon the vicar now.

'How is he?' asked the manufacturer softly.

'As bad as he can be;' fresh tears rising to her eyes, which already showed traces of weeping. 'Jane is out, Mr Wakelin; so I came to tell you that, if you are not nervous about the infection, father would be very glad to speak to you for a moment.'

The strong man's face blanched, but not with fear. 'Infection? Me nervous? Not quite,' he said brusquely as he entered. 'What can I do for him?'

'This way, please. No; the doctor says there's really no danger to other people now. His throat is all right, but the diphtheria has left him so awfully weak.' Then, almost in a whisper: 'Try to be tender to him, Mr Wakelin.'

Perhaps he heard, perhaps he did not. At any rate he made no reply; but, after tapping gently at the door she indicated, went gently in and closed it behind him.

The sight of the pale, wasted features upon the pillow thrilled him to the heart; for he had a heart, though one hard to be reached, encased as it was within a very thick and rough exterior shell; and none understood better than he how greatly his own actions had contributed to bring the clergyman thus low.

'If his spirits were not so depressed, he might yet rouse himself and pull through; but with all this load upon his mind, whether he deserves to have it there or not, I doubt if he'll rally,' the doctor had remarked to Wakelin only yesterday.

'He doesn't deserve it,' that worthy managed to bring out gruffly, as he turned off, carrying a shaft in his soul that rankled sorely there, and leaving Dr Mitchell to nod sagaciously as he muttered to himself: 'Then, my friend, you merit more than ever you'll get in the way of punishment.'

From the side of the bed, Mildred, wan with

long nursing and watching, advanced, with the ghost of a smile, to offer her hand. And, hearing a footstep, Mr Russell opened his eyes. 'It is you!' he murmured in a weak whisper.—'My dearest, leave us for five minutes.' And the wife obeyed.

'I can't talk much,' the vicar said, still in that same husky tone; 'yet there is one thing I want to tell you, Wakelin. I am a dying man'—

'Don't lose heart, sir. Indeed, Mr Russell'— But the other did not heed the interruption.

'The word of dying men is generally credited. So I desire to assure you—once more—that I never appropriated—that money,' the last words coming out in a series of gasps painful to hear.

'Oh sir, I'm sure on't,' cried the manufacturer. 'I've been certain this long while! But the chance to pay back old scores wor too good.'

A brighter gleam came into the dull eyes. 'You did not actually doubt me?'

'Only nows and thens at first. Niver sence that day in the study. No guilty chap could 'a spoke as you did then.'

'And yet you spread the story?'

'Yes, I spread the story,' in dogged confession.

'Why?' as the languid eyes closed again, and the head turned restlessly upon the pillow.

'To bring you down,' blurted out the Yorkshireman. 'I'm as good as you any day, and you'd never own to it. And so'—

Mr Russell started feebly and again looked up. 'Never own to it? Have I seemed as proud as that? Then—I deserve—it all!' more faintly than ever.

'Oh sir, never give in! I'll have your death on my conscience, if anything happens. And I'll do all as in me lays! I'll tell the parish that I've been a fool! I'll'—

The vicar smiled, such a pathetic, dreary smile. 'A tale is more easily put about than contradicted,' he answered. 'Do what you can. But remember—if your friends—still think—the worst—it is—your—punishment! We've both—been wrong. Forgive me, Wakelin!' his thin fingers wandering in search of the other's hand.

The man sank on his knees upon the floor, and burying his face in the bedclothes, burst into tears. 'If on'y you'd a spoke so afore!' he wailed, 'if on'y you'd a spoke so afore!'

It was thus that at length they came to a better appreciation of each other. And though when, in another minute, Mildred summarily ended the interview, she found her husband too weary to move or speak, his talk with Wakelin proved the turning-point in his illness. From that hour, very slowly yet surely too, strength began to return to him, and the cloud hanging over the household seemed to lift. The desire for life had come back, and with it the power to recover.

'I dared not die with that charge of pride upon me,' he said once to his wife, as they talked the incident over together weeks later. 'For it was true, and I have been guilty. Mildred, I must make what reparation I can.'

'It seems to me that your fault was a very small one compared with his,' remarked the lady, 'even supposing yours was a fault at all. But really, Charles, not to show that you consider

yourself better born and better bred than these people'—

He laid his hand on hers with a silencing glance of reproof. 'Mildred, you have been nearly as bad as I. Let us try to help each other to amend,' was his only answer.

'And what of the injury that Wakelin has done you, and done purposely, too?' she retorted. 'I suppose you'll not prosecute now?'

'No. Many things become plain to one in illness. I have been proud and offensive to my people, or they would never have treated me as they have done. It is just chastisement that I should be lowered in their eyes. And I must bear it.'

Of course she loved and honoured him the more for the resolve; yet, knowing as she did more than was possible for him, still shut up in his sick-room, to know of the utter futility of Wakelin's repentant efforts to stop the ball which he had himself set rolling, her woman's heart sank as she listened to that decision.

'Eh mon, they've got ower thee! On coorse t'passon took fever from Tom Atkin, poor lad. But that don't giv' un noo roight t'tak' mooney what belongs t'parish,' was the sort of response with which Joseph's best arguments were met. 'Tell us wheer t'coin went if not t'Clarke, and then'— Till at last Wakelin was almost in despair.

'Mr Russell, sir, wain't the Bishop move you? This air ain't the kind for delicate folks; and it'll be some while afore you're as strong as you wor,' he remarked one morning to the vicar, with all good intentions, but singularly little tact. For through that transparent device the clergyman saw only too clearly what were the genuine motives.

'So you've not succeeded?' he returned. 'Well, I never supposed you would. Yorkshiremen are stubborn when once they take up an idea, Wakelin. I've remarked that before to-day, with a little laugh. And Wakelin changed the subject hastily.

'At any rate, you'll let me bring the carriage at three and give you a drive? Mitchell tells me as you ought to get a breath o' air.'

'Thanks; though I infinitely prefer my own room at present. How lazy this weakness makes one!'

It was whilst this interview was in progress up-stairs, that another and perhaps more important conversation was being carried on between two young people in the drawing-room, where Ena had been practising, and whither Dick, a strong, set purpose in his mind, had followed her.

'Have you realised that you'll be reduced to the sad necessity of missing me in another fortnight?' he remarked, with a smile, though his fingers were trembling as he abstracted from the music-rest a waltz of Chopin's that she had just finished, substituting the well-known and most beautiful of all Schubert's sonatas. 'Trinity Sunday is not far off. How shall I manage in my lonely rooms, Ena, after this taste of home-life?'

She shook her head, instead of speaking; it was easier at the moment.

'My sister Ena had always promised to come with me,' the young man continued persistently. 'But now'—

The pause was more eloquent than words. Clearly enough, Dick's ideas of love-making had improved of late.

Deep silence, broken only by the chords which Ena was drawing from the instrument in front of her. Dick watched her drooping face with a very eager, hopeful look in his bright eyes.

'Ena, I scarcely dare ask it. There is so much money between us, that people are sure to say hard things.'

'My money has never been anything but a bother yet,' exclaimed the young lady, with petulance. 'I used to think I should like to come into a fortune. But since I've had one, I've done nothing but hate it!'

'Oh! I wouldn't do that,' he declared. 'There are uses in money, as you'll find out by-and-by.' Then, with a sudden seizing of his chance, 'Let me teach you, Ena! Come and help me in my work amongst those who need some of it. Darling, if indeed you don't think that gold and silver need divide us, will you love me? Will you be my wife?'

But her head only sank the lower, and an expression almost of terror crept into Dick's yearning countenance.

'Oh Ena, and I want you so! You are all the world to me! Will you send me away when my whole heart belongs to you?'

She laughed very quietly then. 'Why didn't you say that first of all?' she answered.

Of course the news spread quickly through the vicarage; and Mildred wept a few tears of joy as she understood that the girl whom she had so long ago taken to her motherly heart was now to become her daughter indeed. Nor was there any effort made to confine the intelligence within four walls.

'Our wedding is not going to be put off for a dozen years or so; we shall be married very soon indeed,' asserted Dick, upon being questioned by Bijou. 'Oh yes, it's quite true, Ena, my dear. Else I shall be poisoned first and ruined afterwards by extravagant landladies. And then, what will you do?'

'Take Sir Marmaduke,' shrieked Bijou, with a backward nod at her brother, as she made a speedy exit before he could catch and punish her. 'Here's Mr Wakelin and the brougham for dad,' she added, returning after a moment to give the intelligence. 'Dick, he'll want your arm down-stairs; he always does.'

But the vicar was already descending, leaning upon the shoulder that he loved best in the world. When he reached the hall he looked down at his wife with a smile. 'How strong I'm getting, to be able to put up with your assistance, am I not, old lady? Now for my coat, Bijou; the thick one, please.'

She darted away to the coat-rack, where, however, the garment was not to be discovered, a fact which her shrill voice speedily proclaimed.

'It's in my wardrobe, then,' from her father. 'I was not wearing it for some time before I was ill. The last time that I had it on—when was it?'

Ena and Mr Wakelin exchanged glances, as the same remembrance recurred to the mind of each.

'Never since the morning that the money was lost,' the girl exclaimed, half aloud and half to the manufacturer. 'Here it is, though, now.'

'And jolly heavy too,' from its bearer. 'Mr Wakelin, as Dick is staring at Ena instead of helping me, you'd better take it.'

'It is heavy,' holding up the thick garment in his two hands to try the weight. 'Why, the pocket is full of something hard. May I empty it?' Then, suddenly, 'Mr Russell!'

At that startled exclamation all eyes turned upon him, whilst he withdrew his fist from the pocket into which he had thrust it. From between the fingers one or two gold coins escaped, and falling, rang loudly upon the tiled floor.

'The pupil teachers' salaries at last,' gasped Mildred, turning white. 'Oh, my dear Charlie!' And flinging herself upon his breast, she burst into tears. None but the wife herself could have told what to her had been the suffering of the past few weeks.

'And with the money that memorandum I brought of the amount. I'd forgotten it until this instant,' from Wakelin, as he flattened out a scrap of note-paper, bearing half-a-dozen figures. 'You must 'a' slipped it in here for safety, as you was called out to Brown's. On'y it's a wonder the clinking didn't remind you! Come, the folks may chatter now as much as they choose, any way. And if they ain't ashamed—why, they ought to be. I am, I know.'

But the vicar had sunk upon a chair and covered his face with his hands. 'You are right! That's exactly what I did. It all comes back to me now,' he murmured.

For a moment no other word was uttered. Then he lifted his face, and, looking around him, spoke the feeling of his heart. 'Thank God!' he said reverently. And Wakelin added, 'Amen!'

THE HIGHLAND BAGPIPE.

A SHORT time ago, a newspaper, in describing a march past of a Highland Volunteer brigade, stated that seventy-nine pipers formed the band, and played the men past. With the exception of Prince Charlie's hundred pipers an' a', an' a', this is probably the greatest number of men ever forming a band of pipers. It may be that the seventy-nine pipers was a printer's mistake on the part of the newspaper in question for 'Seventy-ninth' pipers—that is, the pipers from the Seventy-ninth Regiment.

Although Byron and Scott in stirring lines have told of the power of the mountain music, a very considerable number of the admirers of these two poets, while alive to the beauty of the language describing the 'Camerons' Gathering,' would scarcely care to concede any merit to the pipes save that of producing the most ear-piercing discord. It seems somehow the fate of men and things which call forth from many the most enthusiastic admiration, to be the butt of depreciation equally vigorous. The aversion which Englishmen have to the bagpipe is due chiefly to that prejudice, half affected, half real, which causes John Bull to deny the existence of any good thing north of the Tweed. In passing judg-

ment on the pipes, a very high standard is in vogue. The national instrument is supposed to possess a capability to accompany the drawing-room singer when the piano is out of tune, a task which it must be admitted is somewhat too onerous for an instrument especially adapted for military uses. Had the bugle or the drum been of Scotch origin, doubtless, they, too, would have been consigned to the category of things deserving a qualified opinion. It is not assuming too much to suppose that the English are sufficiently a music-loving race to have spared the violin such treatment if it had come from over the Border.

Though now associated with Scotland, the bagpipe is an instrument of great antiquity, and was known long ago to some Indian races, also to the Italians and Bretons. It appears to have reached its most popular development, from the musical and utilitarian view, in the case of the Highland bagpipe. The groundwork of the instrument is, as the name implies, a bag of skins sewn together, and of course perfectly air-tight. This condition is aided by the use of treacle, which is poured into the bag and allowed to soak well into it. Into the bag are fitted five wooden stocks, generally of crocus or ebony. These stocks in their turn hold the three drones, the chanter, and the mouth-piece—the chanter being perforated by the note-holes, while the mouth-piece is used for filling the bag. Each of the drone-pipes, and the chanter, is fitted with reeds made of Spanish cane, contrary to the general impression, which imagines the chanter to be a kind of flute, and the drones hollow sticks.

Bagpipe music has a fixed scale, and the treble or G clef is the only one used. The great difficulty of playing, however, is to obtain the doubling of the notes at once quickly and clearly. This profusion of doubled or grace notes, as they are called, makes the manuscript of bagpipe music look something like a document filched from the British Museum. Most players carry the drones on their left shoulder, but the right is sometimes used. In this case the player has to take the drones out and fix them so that the bass drone will rest on the right shoulder. If not, he must place his head between the drones, and support them by the connecting cord resting on the back of his neck, the small drones not being long enough to find support on the shoulder. To the Sassenach, such words as Taorluath, Taorlath Mach, Crunluath, Crunluath Breabach, look very ominous; but being interpreted, they are simply methods of doubling and trebling the notes. It can hardly be denied that the above terms, although they might be called jaw-breakers, look much more imposing than the Italian expressions which figure so largely in pianoforte practices.

It is not assuming too much to claim for Highland music that it has produced tunes more eminently fitted for marching than the music of any other nation. Most of us at some time or other have come across a Highland regiment on the march. Who does not know the roll of the distant drums, and mingling with it that prolonged drone, which gradually resolves itself into some old familiar tune, composed long ago to celebrate some bloody clan raid, such, for instance, as the Pibroch of Donuil Dhu? To the

Scotsman, there is never any mistaking that sound; and though we may be nineteenth-century individuals with tall hats and black coats, we can't help going just a little way, and keeping step also. The pulse beats just a little quicker, and, despite all cheap sneers, the memory of a thousand years is a little more real than might have been expected. If an impartial observer should take such an occasion as this, he will notice that there is a swing and a go about a Highland regiment, quite peculiar to itself, and due in great measure to the music of the pipes. The swing of the sporrans and the waving of the kilts may add to the effect, and indeed such a sight would be difficult to beat; but watch the same body of men in tartan trews and white shell jackets, and you will see the same swing. It is not the easy gait of the jack-tar when under arms, nor the quick, sharp, precise step of an ordinary line regiment. It is a something born of the music, hard to account for, but nevertheless very apparent.

Another reason why the pipes get such scant sympathy is, that very often acquaintance with pipe-playing is brought about by that parody of the Celt, the Whitechapel Highlander. This gentleman perambulates the streets of many of our great towns in a guise which betrays evidence of having been procured at a cast-off clothing establishment. It is indeed a revelation to see one of these fellows in an old 93d Highlander's kilt with a Royal Stuart plaid and a tremendous belt, possessing a buckle about the size of a large dinner-plate. The sporrán, too, is, to say the least, terrific; while, to complete this motley rag-shop, the worthy carries an old cavalry sword in place of a Highland claymore. The sword dance with which he favours his street audiences would do equally well for a hornpipe or an Irish jig. These good fellows hunt in couples, one to dance, and one to play. Occasionally they favour a crowd with a grand military march; but this by the way. The whole array is more than likely to be the property of some enterprising person, who rigs up a number of these men, after giving them a few lessons on the chanter, and sends them out to annoy decent people by their efforts to squeeze out—it can be called by no other name—the 'Barren Rocks of Aden' or the 'March of the Athole Men.' Their performances are always wound up by the Reel of Tulloch.

To hear men like M'Kay, the Prince of Wales's piper, or old John M'Kenzie, instructor to the London Scottish Volunteers, or some of the excellent performers who grace with their playing many of the summer Highland gatherings, is a discovery—nay, more, a startling eye-opener—for many who class pipe-playing with such elementary music as horn-blowing or comb-playing.

The pipes may not be the highest form of music; but many a time have they sounded very sweetly in the ears of the beleaguered and hard pressed. The fact of their being played at the relief of Lucknow has become a matter of historical controversy; but at the present time the relief of Ekowe is not sufficiently ancient for the presence of the pipes to be called into question. No doubt, many of us will live long enough to see the columns of the daily papers filled with letters to prove that no pipers ever marched into

Ekowe's fort playing 'The Campbells are coming.' The extension of the Volunteer movement has caused the bagpipes to play no inauspicious part in mimic war. What more popular, after a heavy field-day, in which our Volunteer forces have been engaged at Aldershot, or in the Easter manoeuvres in the south of England, than the 'Elcho tartan' and swinging stride of the London Scottish; while their dozen or sixteen pipers, stationed opposite the saluting base, play them by to the tune of 'Hieland Laddie.' The Scottish have a reputation for marching second to none, and are the envy of many regiments not blest with pipers. It is, however, in the 'last scene of all,' when the son of the Gael is borne to his last resting-place, that the depth of feeling and sympathy with surroundings of the Highland music is most evident. Nothing seems to intensify and emphasise the desolation and the separation of death more than the sad wailing notes of 'Lord Lovat's Lament,' or 'Lochaber no more.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ARCTIC exploration is once more attracting so much attention, that any fresh information concerning the north polar regions is apt to excite interest. A vessel recently returned to San Francisco, after carrying supplies to the whalers north of Alaska, has reported that one of the fleet found open water at the mouth of the Mackenzie River, and that its master was daring enough to follow it until a more northerly point was reached than that attained by the Greely expedition. Such open water is not unknown in this neighbourhood, but it occurs only once in about ten years. Whalers regard it as a most dangerous thing to take advantage of this open water, for there is always a fear that the ice may close in behind them and prevent their return. One whaling master some years ago took the risk, and proceeded northward for about three hundred miles, but no whales rewarded his intrepidity. He saw land-birds, and met with a considerable amount of driftwood, which led him to believe that land was not far distant.

An extraordinary accident, the first of its kind, occurred recently at Bradford. A boy was carrying a steel cylinder of compressed oxygen, when it suddenly burst with tremendous violence and killed the unfortunate lad. This terrible occurrence is a matter of very great importance to a large number of workers, for compressed gases of different kinds are now used in a number of industries, and thousands of these steel cylinders are in daily use. The cause of the accident is attributed by experts to be due to faulty material in the construction of this particular cylinder. As a rule, the most rigid tests are employed in ascertaining the stability of these gas receptacles before they are issued to the public; and some years ago experiments at Glasgow showed that it was impossible to rupture one by the most violent treatment. In one experiment, a fully charged

cylinder was dropped repeatedly upon an iron block from a height of twenty feet, and in another it was submitted to blows from a steam-hammer without any adverse effect but a few dents on its surface. In view of the accident at Bradford it will become necessary that every gas cylinder shall have some kind of official mark showing that it has been tested to a great deal more than the pressure it is called upon to withstand.

All lovers of nature will feel glad that an attempt is being made to prevent rural districts being spoilt by obtrusive advertisements. A Bill is now before Parliament the preamble of which states that 'it is expedient to prohibit the raising of unsightly erections which destroy the rural scenery of Great Britain and Ireland.' This Bill provides that no person shall affix to any fence, gate, post, hoarding, &c., any printed or written matter, or any picture, so as to be in view from any highway, railway, &c. The Act will not interfere with what may be called legitimate advertising—that is to say, a board may be erected on land showing that it is to let or for sale; or any person carrying on a business may advertise that business on the land occupied by him. It is aimed solely at that system of advertising which has sprung up quite recently by which pleasant meadows are rendered unsightly by the presence in their midst of huge hoardings advertising food-stuffs, soaps, and patent medicines. It is not only the general public which requires protection against such advertising, but the advertisers themselves, for the advertisements are not always in the best taste.

An ingenious form of boat to be driven by hydraulic propulsion has been designed and patented by Mr J. C. Walker of Washington. Many such boats have been devised, and at the present time certain floating fire-engines are propelled in the Thames by this method. But Mr Walker's design differs very much from those which have preceded it. There are two main pipes extending from bow to stern open to the water, and within them are screw propellers, each having a rim fixed to the outer edges of its blades, so as to fit closely into its containing pipe. These main pipes gradually taper towards the stern, and from them proceed smaller pipes furnished with nozzles, which find their exits at the sides of the vessel. The action of the propellers is to force the water with great velocity through this system of piping, and steering and turning are rapidly effected by turning the nozzles in any direction required. In case of stranding, all the nozzles would be directed downwards, so that the boat would be lifted while the bottom was scoured at the same time. The design seems to us to be hopeful, and we should be glad to learn the results of actual trial of the system.

Mr John Briggs of Clitheroe, Lancashire, has forwarded to us a plan and description of his patent Lime-kiln, by which, he asserts, a saving of from thirty-five to forty per cent. in fuel is secured when compared with the older system of burning lime. Existing kilns can be altered to the new pattern without much expense or difficulty, securing not only saving in fuel, but superior quality of the lime produced, a greater output per kiln, and less refuse. The principal

feature of the patent kiln is a drying chamber above the calcining chamber, in which the waste heat thoroughly dries and partially burns the limestone. The high price of fuel during recent years suggested experiments which led to the invention of this kiln.

Another instance of necessity stimulating invention is seen in the wonderful improvements which have been introduced in the manner of using gas for both heating and cooking. The recent coal-strike has had one good effect in teaching the value of gas for both these purposes, and many persons who have adopted it will not readily go back to the mess and trouble of coal-fires. Gas is economical when compared with coal, provided that it is only burned when actually needed: it must not be left to the tender mercies of careless and irresponsible servants. Gas heating and cooking will become general when the gas companies, or some other companies, provide us with a cheap non-illuminating gas for these purposes. Such a gas, it is said, could be retailed for about a shilling per thousand feet.

While there is a constant cry for more open spaces in our crowded metropolis, and while certain societies and individuals are doing their best to provide these 'lungs' for pent-up London, the builder, on the other hand, is seizing upon every rood of open land which he can find to cover it with loosely combined bricks and mortar. Within the past thirty-five years, Vauxhall, Cremorne, and the Surrey Gardens have disappeared, and although in some respects this need not be deplored, it seems a sad thing that they could not be preserved as parks. A garden of another kind is now threatened with extinction, a garden whose chronicles embrace the history of botany in this country—the old Physic Garden at Chelsea. This garden was bestowed upon the Apothecaries' Company by Sir Hans Sloane in 1721, on the express condition that 'it should at all times be continued as a Physic Garden for the manifestation of the power and wisdom and goodness of God in creation, and that the apprentices might learn to distinguish good and useful plants from beautiful ones.' The temptation of the Apothecaries' Company to set this condition at naught is found in the circumstance that the cost of maintaining the garden is seven hundred pounds per annum, and the value of the freehold for building is thirty thousand pounds. We trust that this link with the past will not be severed without some effort being made to save it.

The twelfth course of Health Lectures was recently inaugurated in Edinburgh by Professor M'Fadyean, of the Royal Veterinary College in London, who took for his subject one with which he was peculiarly qualified to deal—namely, 'Diseases of Animals transmissible to Man.' He cautioned his hearers against dogs and cats with mangy or unhealthy-looking skins. Ring-worm, in one form or other, was found in the cat, in young cattle, and in the horse, and was readily transmissible to man. Glanders was one of the most important diseases common to men and animals, and its breeding-place for Scotland was Glasgow, just as London acted in the same capacity for England. He thought that if a little more energy were displayed by the local authorities in Lanarkshire in dealing with the

disease it would soon be stamped out. Finally, the lecturer spoke of hydrophobia, which by reason of its deadly nature and distressingly painful course was the most terrible malady of all that man could contract from one of the lower animals. But thanks to the magnificent researches of Pasteur, the fatal cases when treated by the inoculation method had sunk to less than one per cent.

It has been pointed out by Mr John Wallace, a well-known fish-shipper at Kalama, Washington, that fish when frozen solid for shipment will remain in that condition for several days, provided that they are packed in a particular manner—without ice. A large trade is now done in frozen salmon, and the fish are packed tightly in boxes and loaded into refrigerator cars. The cars are first of all reduced in temperature as low as possible, and the floors are then covered with *chilled* sawdust. The boxes of fish are then placed therein, any spaces between them being filled with the cold sawdust. The car is then closed and sealed, and in reasonably warm weather its contents may be relied upon to arrive at their destination in the most perfect condition after a passage of eighteen days or thereabouts. The saving effected is great, first on the original cost of the ice; secondly, on its freight; and thirdly, in the greater amount of fish which it is possible to carry in its stead.

An interesting experiment has been performed by Mons. H. Le Chatelier, which, although at present of no commercial importance, shows how it is possible to imitate one of nature's processes—namely, the conversion of lime into marble. Carbonate of lime is commonly rendered crystalline and changed into what we call marble by pressure in nature's laboratory and by the aid of volcanic heat. Mons. Chatelier imitates this process by submitting powdered lime to great pressure in a steel cylinder, and conveying heat to it by means of a platinum spiral carrying an electric current. It is found that the powder in the neighbourhood of the hot wire is rendered crystalline and translucent. It might be possible by the employment of heavy machinery to do on a large scale what has been accomplished successfully in an experimental manner, but the cost of the plant would be great, and the expense would hardly be justified when the outcome is so uncertain.

It is said that a circular saw has been invented in France, by the aid of which blocks of stone can be very rapidly cut. The edge of the saw is set with black diamonds, of the kind which are now so successfully employed for drilling through hard rock. But the idea is not new, for a similar saw was patented some years back in America. Indeed, it will be seen that such a saw is the natural outcome of the diamond drill to which we have referred, and the diamond drill is now many years old.

The *Engineer* exposes a cruel fraud to which, in the interest of our numerous readers of an inventive turn of mind, we give publication. Some swindlers are in the habit of looking over the Patent Office publications and learning therefrom that certain persons have taken out letters-patent. They then write to these patentees somewhat to this effect: 'We see that you have patented a good thing. We are acquainted with

a firm which will place it on the market for you, and find capital for its successful introduction, advertising, &c. Please send a cheque for — pounds to cover cost of negotiations.' We need hardly point out to the wary that this letter is written solely in order to secure this cheque. Inventors are frequently needy men, and it is well that they should be warned of these doings.

The 'Safe-boiling' Stove Mat is a device which has just been introduced by Messrs Benham & Froud of the Chandos Metal Works, London. It consists of a round mat of asbestos enclosed in a metal frame, which being placed under a boiling saucepan on a stove prevents its contents burning. Oatmeal, rice, milk, custards, &c. placed above this mat will need no stirring, neither will they burn. When the mat becomes soiled it is merely necessary to turn its blackened surface next the fire, when it will burn itself clean.

Photogravure has killed steel-engraving, and the photo-mechanical process block has done much to kill wood-engraving. But Mr Walter Crane, who knows what he is writing about, believes that there are signs that wood-engraving will once more revive 'after holding its own as the great popular interpreter of art since the invention of printing; and, with the revival of printing as an art, the craft of the wood-engraver, contributing as it has done, in association with vigorous design, to the beauty of books, cannot permanently suffer neglect.' Unfortunately for Mr Crane's contention, there are few really good wood-engravers now, and fresh workers are not likely to be attracted to what seems to be a declining industry. Artists are now learning how to obtain the best effects from process-work, and most would prefer to have their ideas interpreted by the rigidly correct camera than by an indifferent wood-engraver.

A new system of heating railway carriages has recently been put into practice on the Midland Railway, pipes conveying steam from the engine running right round each carriage, and thus dispensing with the unsatisfactory and clumsy foot-warmer. The system will, when adopted entirely, it is said, effect a very great saving. The only matter for surprise is that such an obviously convenient method of warming railway carriages—which has been suggested in these columns and elsewhere on more than one occasion—has not been adopted before.

Some improvements have lately been introduced in the incandescent gaslight system which are worthy of remark. The refractory mantle, which, by becoming white-hot in an atmospheric flame, gives out so much more light per cubic foot of gas burnt than any other form of burner known, is now supported on a central stem, which itself becomes white-hot, and thus adds to the general illuminating power. Formerly, the mantle was hung to a side-support of metal, and this gave rise to breakage of both mantle and glass chimney. The chimney is now made of mica, and is therefore quite unbreakable under any conditions whatever. The efficiency of the light is in other ways improved.

A curious freak of nature is reported to our contemporary *Nature* by Colonel A. T. Fraser, with regard to two Hindu dwarfs which he

photographed in the Karnoul district of the Madras Presidency. One of these dwarfs states that he belongs to a family all the male members of which have been dwarfs for many generations. They marry ordinary native girls, and their female children are of normal size; but the boys, when about six years of age, cease to grow, and become stunted specimens of humanity, who are almost helpless and can only walk a few yards.

The tremendous power of the sword-fish has often been evidenced by a ship's side being pierced with the terrible weapon which gives the creature its name. Four or five inches of solid timber have been thus penetrated, the sword being broken off and left in the wood. These fish are plentiful off the island of Martha's Vineyard, on the coast of Massachusetts, and its flesh being much valued, it is harpooned in great numbers; and many are the stories told of narrow escapes encountered by its captors through its pugnacity. One of them deals with an experience met with last summer, when a man in a small boat proceeded from a fishing smack to secure a wounded fish which was motionless and apparently exhausted. But no sooner was the harpoon line moved, than the fish made a struggle for life, and after diving once, with the object of spearing the boat, and missing his aim, the fish dived a second time, and succeeded in driving his sword completely through the boat from side to side. By constant baling, the boat was kept afloat until assistance arrived, when it was found that the intruder weighed three hundred and thirty-eight pounds. The incident is described and illustrated in a recent issue of the *Scientific American*.

A CURIOUS TRADE.

IN a small village in the south of England, 'Jimmy Greg' carries on his business of naturalist and taxidermist. The old man is a well-known personage for miles around, and may often be seen, with his sugaring can and collecting implements, making his way to the adjacent woods in search of specimens. One afternoon the writer called at his little shop to interview him. After inspecting numerous cases of butterflies, moths, and birds' eggs, we adjourned to his cosy sitting-room, where Jimmy gave me a full account of his work.

I always had a liking for natural history (said the old man), and when quite a boy, had the finest collection of birds' eggs in the district. For over twenty years I have been in my present line, and have increased my trade until now I clear about one hundred and twenty pounds a year—quite a large income in this part of the country. Collecting insects pays me best. I have regular customers and send cases of specimens to all parts of England.

Most of the nocturnal moths are caught by sugaring. About dusk I turn out with a tin containing a mixture of brown sugar and rum; with a brush I daub the trunks of trees in the clearings of the woods. I visit the trees several times during the night and collect a great number of moths; the rum stupefies them, and they are easily captured. Most of the moths taken

at sugar are of the commoner kinds, but there is always a sprinkling of better insects. Good or bad, I have no difficulty in disposing of them.

You would be surprised at the number of amateurs who buy direct from me. One old gentleman who has done business with me over fifteen years must have a splendid collection of birds' skins; I have sent him ten pounds' worth at once several times.

The different hawk-moths sell from threepence to two shillings each, the latter price being for the peculiar Death's-head moth. Any damaged females I capture are boxed off, and in the course of a few days they will generally lay a few hundred eggs; these I advertise in the entomological papers, and send to purchasers by post packed in quills.

Caterpillars I have very little sale for; but the scarcer kinds I feed up until they turn to pupæ, for which there is always a great demand, as they need very little attention, and when the moth emerges, it is in faultless condition. I have a greenhouse in my back garden, in which I grow nettles, grasses, and weeds of all kinds; any uncommon caterpillar I meet with is put in there, and generally finds some kind of plant to feed on. The ground is occasionally watered; beyond that, everything is left to nature. On reaching maturity, the larva buries itself in the soil for its change into the pupa state; and after its long winter's sleep, emerges from its case as a winged insect. Sometimes on a bright spring morning I may find eighty or ninety moths have made their appearance since the previous evening; this will be repeated day after day for some weeks. I generally kill the moths by dropping benzine on them from a medicine dropper. There are several other ways; but this is as convenient as any. The specimens are then pinned on a cork setting-board, grooved down the centre to admit the body of the moth; the wings are put in position and fastened down by strips of thin cardboard, which are removed after the insect has dried and set.

An amusing incident occurred some years ago. I was rearing some larvæ of a scarce moth, and attended to them daily. One morning an eruption broke out on my neck; the irritation became so painful that I had to consult a doctor. He said I was suffering from a very uncommon skin disease, and called in his assistant to look at it. After lecturing on it and calling it by a Latin name, he gave me a lotion that burned like hot cinders. The inflammation grew worse, until one day a customer of mine, a well-known entomologist, called to see me. When I told him what the doctor had said, he laughed until I thought he would have had a fit. 'Why,' he remarked, 'it's only urtication. I have known plenty of similar cases. The hairs on some caterpillars come off very often, and if they get on the face or neck, cause great irritation. Throw the lotion into the fire; take a few doses of citrate of magnesia, and you'll be all right in a few days.'

There is one strange method of catching moths that I have not yet mentioned. If you rear a female Kentish-glory or Emperor moth, and take her into the fields in a gauze cage, she will attract any males of the same species that may be in the neighbourhood. They will crawl round the prison of their charmer with fluttering wings,

and may be easily captured. Light, also, has a great fascination for moths. Many naturalists on the outskirts of towns visit the street lamps regularly to net the insects that settle on the glasses.

We sat smoking and talking more than an hour; and when I left the old man my knowledge of insect-collecting was greatly increased.

F A R A W A Y.

Do they think of me to-day,
By the Christmas fire's warm glow,
In the old home far away,
Where they loved me long ago?
When they note my vacant chair,
Do they pause amidst their glee
To breathe a tender prayer,
Or a kindly wish for me?

Through the glistening winter rime,
From the church across the stream,
Do they listen to the chime
That I hear but in a dream?

While the beads like rubies show
On the frosted holly spray,
And the paths are white with snow
Round the old home far away!

In this sunny foreign land,
Where no Christmas berries shine,
How I wish that each dear hand
Could be fondly clasped in mine!
Ah, the mellow firelight falls,
And the restless shadows play,
On the holly brightened walls
Of the old home far away!

But they think of me, I know;
They still hold my memory dear;
By the Yule log's cheery glow
They will sometimes wish me near;
And my tears unbidden fall
As in broken tones I pray
That God may bless them all
In the old home far away!

E. MATHESON.

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